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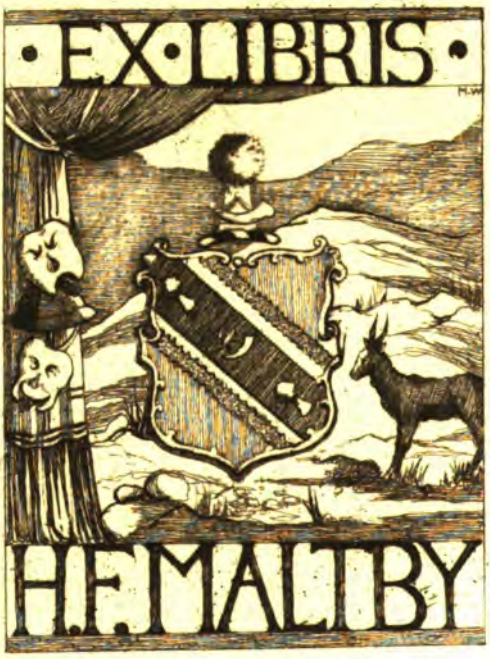
THE TRAGEDY OF DREYFUS

G. W. STEEVENS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CAPTAIN DREYFUS.

THE TRAGEDY OF DREYFUS.

BY

G. W. STEEVENS

AUTHOR OF

"WITH KITCHENER TO KHARTUM," ETC., ETC.

WITH PORTRAIT AND APPENDIX.

LONDON AND NEW YORK:

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CONTENTS

CHAPTER		PAGE
I.	THE STORY OF THE CASE . . .	1
II.	HOW DREYFUS CAME TO RENNES .	25
III.	ON THE EVE	53
IV.	DREYFUS	62
V.	MERCIER	73
VI.	A SHOT IN THE STREET . . .	86
VII.	ROGET	101
VIII.	PICQUART	122
IX.	THE ALSATIANS	138
X.	THE COURT AND THE CASE . .	148
XI.	LABORI	159
XII.	HIS COMRADES UPON DREYFUS . .	168
XIII.	ESTERHAZY	185
XIV.	A DRAWN BATTLE AND A ROUT .	196

CHAPTER		PAGE
XV.	THE EXPERTS	212
XVI.	THE CONFESSION	227
XVII.	THE DEFENCE	237
XVIII.	DEMANGE	256
XIX.	"GUILTY!"	272
XX.	FRANCE AFTER DREYFUS . . .	280
APPENDIX	. . . . .	309

I HAVE to thank the Publishers of this book for enriching it with an Appendix, whereby the history of the Dreyfus case may be followed in official documents.

G. W. S.

and intelligent officer; but his demeanour oscillated between complaisance and ostentation, and he was not popular among his comrades.

In September of that year a secret agent brought a document to Major Henry, sub-chief of the Intelligence Department of the War Office; it was torn into little pieces, and was said to have been taken from the overcoat pocket of Colonel Schwarzkoppen, the German Military Attaché in Paris. When pieced together it proved to be a *bordereau*, or covering letter, and ran as follows :—

Though I have no news indicating that you wish to see me, I send you, monsieur, some interesting information:—

(1) A note on the hydraulic brake of the 120,* and the way in which this piece has behaved.
(2) A note on the covering troops † (some modifications will be introduced by the new plan).
(3) A note on a modification in artillery formations.
(4) A note on Madagascar.
(5) The projected firing-manual for field artillery (March 14, 1894).

* *i.e.* The 120-millimetre gun. There are two pieces of this calibre in the French Army—the long and the short.

† A sort of frontier force kept always equipped with a view to cover and protect the detraining and formation of armies during the early hours of a war.

This last document is very difficult to get, and I can only have it at my disposal for a very few days. The Ministry of War has sent a limited number of copies to the various corps, and these corps are responsible for them; each officer in possession of one must give it up after the manœuvres. If, therefore, you wish to take from it what interests you, and hold it at my disposal afterwards, I will take it, unless you would like me to have a copy made of it *in extenso* and send the copy to you.

I am just starting for the manœuvres.

It appeared from the last words that the writer of this letter was a French officer; it was inferred that he was also a gunner, and on the General Staff. Specimens were taken of the various officers' handwriting, and it was decided that Dreyfus was the man. M. Bertillon, the well-known head of the Criminal Identification Bureau in Paris, concurred. The inquiry into the case was committed to Major Du Paty de Clam. On October 15th, having sent for Dreyfus, he ordered him to write from dictation a letter containing phrases used in the *bordereau*. After writing a few lines, says Du Paty, he turned pale and his hand trembled. Immediately he was arrested and taken to the Cherche-Midi prison. Major Forzinetti, commandant of the Paris military prisons, was

waiting there, and Dreyfus was immured *au secret*—that is, without the possibility of communicating with anyone but the chief warder. He remained *au secret* until December 5th. Major Du Paty de Clam came almost every day, under a special authorization from the Minister of War, General Mercier, to induce the prisoner to confess. One of his inspirations was to creep noiselessly into the cell and then suddenly flash a strong light on to the prisoner's face—to see if he looked guilty! All this time Dreyfus, according to Major Forzinetti, was terribly agitated; from the corridor he could be heard to cry and groan; he flung himself upon the furniture and against the walls; he took nothing but broth and sweetened wine; he never undressed. Yet all the time he protested his innocence. On November 1st the *Libre Parole*, informed apparently by Major Henry, announced Dreyfus's arrest, and attacked General Mercier savagely for an alleged wish to screen him. On November 28th, ten days before his trial, Mercier made a communication to a newspaper stating that "the guilt of this officer is absolutely certain."

He was brought before a court-martial on December 19th. The trial was held behind closed doors; he was found guilty and sentenced to public degradation from his rank and to solitary confinement for life. The first part of the sentence was carried out on January 5th, 1895. In the presence of a large body of troops and correspondents of the press, the galloons were torn from his képi, the trefoils from his sleeves, the buttons from his tunic, the numbers from his collar and the stripes from his trousers; his sword was broken, and the scabbard thrown to the ground. In this state he passed before the men under his command. He went through the ordeal with dignity and firmness, though to French onlookers his bearing seemed mechanical. In a loud voice he again and again proclaimed his innocence; but he used words to Captain Lebrun-Renault, who was on guard over him, which that officer interpreted as a confession. He was taken back to prison; a month later the Chamber of Deputies made a special law authorizing his deportation to the Ile du Diable, off the coast of French Guiana. Thither, still pro-

testing his innocence even in his sleep, he was deported.

That, until a few months ago, was all Dreyfus knew of the Dreyfus case.

Nothing happened for a year. But in the month of May, 1896, there appeared in the Intelligence Department, where Lieutenant-Colonel Picquart had lately succeeded Colonel Sandherr as head, a *petit bleu* or express letter-card. It came, according to Colonel Picquart, from the German Embassy, as the *bordereau* did; it was torn, just like the *bordereau*, into little pieces; it was pieced together again, like it, and was found to bear the name and address of Major Esterhazy. The card had not been through the post, was not apparently in the handwriting of Colonel Schwarzkoppen, and its purport, while suspicious, was not in itself demonstrative of treachery. Colonel Picquart began to make inquiries about Major Esterhazy. He turned out to have led something of a life of a soldier of fortune—had seen fighting with the Austrian Army and the Papal forces as well as the French. Brought up in Vienna, he knew German

perfectly, Italian well; he was of an exceedingly quick and lively intelligence, and curious of all military information. His life was irregular and dissipated. A secret agent had warned Picquart that documents on artillery were being betrayed by an officer answering more or less to Esterhazy's description, and these documents answered more or less to matters on which Esterhazy had asked brother-officers for information. Picquart next took specimens of Esterhazy's handwriting, and thought he detected in them a striking resemblance to that of the *bordereau*. He showed them to Bertillon and Du Paty de Clam, who were in a position to know the *bordereau* better than anybody, and both bore him out. Finally, Picquart looked into the secret *dossier* of the Dreyfus case, which was preserved in the Intelligence Department. He concluded that the most significant of the rather vague documents it contained would apply just as well to Esterhazy as to Dreyfus. As long as it had been merely a question of evidence against Esterhazy, Picquart's superiors on the General Staff, Generals de Boisdeffre and Gonse, had

encouraged him in his investigations. But now, as soon as they detected his intention of substituting Esterhazy for Dreyfus as the traitor of 1894, they began to check him.

Meanwhile the friends of Dreyfus were beginning to assert his innocence and agitate for a new trial. On September 14th a Paris newspaper stated that at the court-martial a secret document had been shown to the judges and not to the prisoner or the defence—an illegality which would be sufficient to upset the verdict. Madame Dreyfus immediately petitioned for a revision of the case. Next, on the 10th November, another paper published a *facsimile* of the *bordereau*, and the growing party of Dreyfusards set about to prove graphologically that it was not from his hand. On the 18th November, however, any hopes they may have had of official countenance were destroyed. General Billot, who had succeeded Mercier as War Minister, pronounced in the Chamber of Deputies that Dreyfus had been justly and legally condemned.

From that pronouncement it was impossible

to go back. The War Office was pledged henceforth to the guilt of Dreyfus, and the open fight for the revision of his trial began. Picquart, who had declared himself against his superiors on the question, was removed from the Intelligence Department—where he was succeeded by Henry, now Lieutenant-Colonel — and sent on a mission to the frontier of Tripoli — on the mission, he suggests, of Uriah the Hittite. He there received an abusive letter from Henry making three charges against him: of opening Esterhazy's letters in the post, of attempting to suborn Major Lauth and Captain Junck of the Intelligence Department to allege that the *petit bleu* was in Schwarzkoppen's hand, and of opening and improperly using the secret *dossier*. Picquart, feeling that his junior in rank would hardly write thus if unsupported by higher powers, seized an opportunity to return to Paris in June, 1897, and laid his case before a lawyer, Maître Leblois. In September Leblois communicated what Picquart had told him to M. Scheurer-Kestner, Vice-President of the Senate, who vainly tried to induce

General Billot to open a fresh inquiry into the case of Dreyfus. In the end of October M. de Castro, Esterhazy's stockbroker, bought a *facsimile* of the *bordereau* and recognised it as Esterhazy's handwriting. He communicated with Scheurer-Kestner, who was in communication with Dreyfus's brother. On November 15th M. Mathieu Dreyfus published an open letter, flatly accusing Esterhazy of being the author of the *bordereau* and of the treasonable correspondence it disclosed.

This was the first time Esterhazy's name had been published, and General de Pellieux was instructed to inquire into the charges made against him. From that moment the history of the Dreyfus case is the history of France. The battle for and against Dreyfus went on with ever-increasing savagery. It engrossed the whole of politics and spread chaos into every province of private life. The French press, never distinguished for moderation in controversy, became violent and malignant beyond all parallel. No abuse was too foul or too absurd to be

showered on somebody who thought differently about Dreyfus. The Jews, of course, were fair game. In a score of towns there were anti-Semitic riots; a boy named Max Régis made himself Mayor of Algiers solely on the strength of inciting to loot Jewish ships. The army, on the other hand, was daily held up to ridicule and hatred. The lines of party vanished, and men who had been friends for half a generation now cut one another. I knew myself two young men of letters in Paris; one of them, as is usual in that hive of movements, constituted the school of the other. They were sincerely attached; only, unluckily, the disciple was a clerk of the War Office, and the master was a Jew. They began by hot argument, and then cooled to sulkiness. One day the younger man went to the elder for a final attempt at reconciliation—and saw a photograph of Dreyfus on the mantelpiece. It was all over; now they do not speak. It was not that the one wished to torment Dreyfus or that the other was particularly anxious for his release. Dreyfus had become a symbol—a dogma. The bitterness his case

aroused transcends political animosity, and can only be rivalled from the history of religion.

The Esterhazy Court-Martial was led up to through a maze of intrigues which read half like a novel of Gaboriau's and half like a burlesque opera. Esterhazy's story, which is the more spirited of the two, was that he became aware, through a letter signed *Esperance*, of Picquart's machinations against him. He hastened forthwith to the Minister of War and demanded an inquiry. Soon after that he received a telegram making an appointment for a midnight interview on the Pont Alexander III. He went, and found a veiled lady: she made him give his word of honour not to try to recognise her, and then acquainted him with Picquart's machinations against him.

Afterwards followed similar interviews, in the course of one of which the mysterious veiled lady gave him a sealed letter with the words "This document proves your innocence." The idea was that it was a photograph of one of the secret documents shown to the Judges of the Dreyfus Court-

Martial; that Henry had one day in the Intelligence Department seen Picquart showing the secret *dossier* to Maître Leblois, and that this photograph had slipped out; that Picquart had stolen it and kept it over a year; that his mistress, who was no other than the veiled lady, had heard him talking in his sleep of it and of his plots against Esterhazy, and, pitying the innocent, had taken the photograph and given it back to Esterhazy as a hold on the War Office. Thither Esterhazy duly returned it in November 1897, and General Billot formally acknowledged its receipt. As for the *bordereau*, Esterhazy's explanation of its correspondence with his handwriting was very simple. Dreyfus had procured specimens of his hand by writing under the name of a Captain Brault for information on a professional topic, and had then traced the *bordereau* over selections from Esterhazy's answer.

Picquart on his side had a tale of machinations to tell. In Tunis he had received a letter of remonstrance from Esterhazy, and on the same day two telegrams signed

respectively *Speranza* and *Blanche*; both implied that his friends knew him to be the forger of the *petit bleu* addressed to Esterhazy. He asserted that these, together with a letter signed *Speranza* which had been addressed to him at the War Office after he left, opened and preserved, were forgeries based on intercepted genuine letters of his friends, intended to ruin him, and perpetrated by Esterhazy and Du Paty de Clam.

Both stories were wild enough. Esterhazy's, however, was believed by the Court-Martial, which, on January 11th, 1898, acquitted him. Picquart's story, on the other hand, was believed by Judge Bertulus, before whom he brought an action for forgery against Esterhazy and Mdlle. Pays, his mistress, and Du Paty de Clam. Nor is it now denied by the strongest Anti-Dreyfusard—least of all by Esterhazy himself—that this whole story of the veiled lady and of Dreyfus's trick to get Esterhazy's writing was a fiction concocted by this same trio with the aid of Henry. For the time, though, it served. And

on the day of Esterhazy's acquittal Picquart was arrested on the charge of communicating professional documents to Leblois and conveyed to the prison of Mont Valérien.

Two days later Zola published his famous letter "*J'accuse.*" Du Paty de Clam, Mercier, Billot, Boisdeffre and Gonse, de Pellieux, Major Ravary (the official prosecutor of Esterhazy), the experts in handwriting who had pronounced for the War Office, the War Office itself, the Judges of the Court-Martial who had condemned Dreyfus and acquitted Esterhazy—all were violently accused of knavery or folly or both. Zola was prosecuted before a Civil jury; but the War Minister confined the inquiry to the charge against the Esterhazy Court-Martial of having acquitted the accused to order. The case opened on February 7th, and at first seemed to be going in Zola's favour. His counsel—a hitherto obscure lawyer named Labori—fought the case with audacity and resource. But on the 17th General de Pellieux came forward to the bar of the court and read the following letter

rom the secret *dossier* of the Dreyfus case :—

MY DEAR FRIEND,

I have read that a deputy is going to make an interpellation on Dreyfus. If . . . [an illegible gap here] . . . I shall say that I never had no relations with the Jew. That is understood. If as you are asked, say like that, for nobody must not ever know what happened with him.

ALEXANDRINE.*

The jury were given to understand that this letter had been intercepted between Colonel von Schwarzkoppen and the Italian military attaché, Colonel Panizzardi.

That decided it. Zola was condemned, but he appealed on technical grounds and the sentence was quashed by the Cour de Cassation, the highest appeal court of France. After some hesitation, a second prosecution was decided on, the ground of action this time being narrowed down to three lines ot Zola's letter which confined the issue still more closely to the Esterhazy Court-Martial. This second trial was held at Versailles on

* The English of this translation corresponds with the French of the original, which is grossly ungrammatical.

July 18th and the succeeding days. Maître Labori unsuccessfully put in several technical pleas, the most important being that, on the grounds of the connection between the three lines and the rest of the letter, the defence ought to be allowed to justify the letter in its entirety. When this plea was disallowed the defence threw up the case, and Zola, condemned by default, fled the country.

The excitement in every class was enormous, though the triumph of the Anti-Dreyfusards seemed complete. But already, on July 7th, M. Cavaignac, who had succeeded Billot as Minister of War, had made an important speech in the Chamber, which led up to the most violently dramatic act in the whole story of the case. Cavaignac, as a private deputy, had blamed Billot for not demonstrating to the country the guilt of Dreyfus, and so setting the pernicious agitation for ever to rest. In his speech of July 7th he read out as links in a chain of correspondence between Schwarzkoppen and Panizzardi, three letters, including the one given above. He also insisted on the Lebrun-Renault confession, which had been

first made public late in 1897. For the moment Cavaignac enjoyed a wild ovation. By 572 votes to 2 the Chamber decided that this speech should be posted up on the walls of all the communes of France. Two days later Picquart—who had been expelled the army after giving evidence in the first Zola trial—wrote an open letter to the Premier offering to prove that two of the letters quoted by M. Cavaignac did not refer to Dreyfus, while the third was a forgery. Cavaignac countered by ordering a civil action against him and Leblois for divulging military secrets. Three days later still, Maître Demange, who had been Dreyfus's advocate at the first court-martial, made public the fact that none of the documents read had been communicated either to the prisoner or to himself.

Six weeks later, on August 30th, came the startling news that the document mentioning Dreyfus had been forged by Colonel Henry, that he had confessed, and had cut his throat in prison. It was officially stated that General Roget, an officer on the War Office Staff, had detected the fraud; after-

wards Captain, now Major, Cuignet claimed the discovery. He was working at night, he said, classifying the Dreyfus *dossier* for M. Cavaignac, when he noticed that the letter—which had been torn and gummed together—was in two parts. The cross-ruling of the heading "My dear friend" and the signature "Alexandrine" was blue-grey, that of the body of the letter violet-red. Turning to another genuine document from the reputed author of the first, he found that the heading and signature were cross-ruled violet-red, and the body of the letter blue-grey. The conclusion was obvious: the first letter naming Dreyfus had been written by Henry, who had cut off the heading and signature of the genuine letter and had replaced them by his own imitations. The document had never been examined by lamplight before, and this, according to Cuignet, explains both Henry's blunder and his own discovery. Cavaignac charged Henry with the forgery; for a long time he denied it, but the evidence of the two colours in the paper was irrefutable. It is believed he was assisted by an ex-policeman named

Lemercier-Picard, who had committed and sold other forgeries bearing on the Dreyfus case, had been arrested, and was found strangled in prison. Henry was arrested and taken to the military prison of Mont Valérien. On the way he cried, "What I did, I am ready to do again. It was for the good of the country and of the army." But he had a long interview with an unknown officer in his cell, and immediately after was found with his throat cut twice across and the razor beside him. Whether it was murder or suicide did not appear. The best judges believe he resolved, with a frugal heroism most characteristic of France, to die a lieutenant-colonel so as to ensure his widow a full pension.

After this tremendous event the cause of the Anti-Dreyfusards was for the moment hopeless. Cavaignac and General de Boisdeffre, Chief of the General Staff, resigned. Du Paty de Clam and Esterhazy were retired from the army. Finally, on September 24th, the Cour de Cassation was entrusted with the revision of the Dreyfus Court-Martial.

General Zurlinden, the new Minister of War, resigned at this decision. In October General Chanoine, his successor, who must have known what he was doing when he took office, stood up to defend his colleagues in a critical debate, suddenly turned and attacked them, and resigned from the very tribune. Before this, on September 21st, Picquart had again been imprisoned—this time *au secret*, just as Dreyfus had been—on the charge of having scratched out the name of the real addressee of the now classical express letter-card and substituted Esterhazy's instead. This change had actually been made on the card—Esterhazy's name being first scratched out then re-written in a different ink. Picquart declared this one more perfidious machination to stop his mouth. His surrender was demanded in the name of the Military Governor of Paris (Zurlinden) just as the civil action against him was about to begin. The Court was unable to resist the demand, but before he was handed over Picquart asked leave to speak. "This evening, probably," he said, "I shall go to the Cherche-Midi, and now will be the

last time I can say a word in public. If there is found in my cell the rope of Lemercier-Picard or the razor of Henry, then I shall have been assassinated. Men like me do not commit suicide."

The Criminal Chamber of the Cour de Cassation began the hearing of witnesses on November 8th, 1898, and went on until February 2nd. By a desperate effort the Anti-Dreyfusards pushed through a law transferring the case from the Criminal Chamber of the Court to the whole body of it, which they expected to be more on their side. The united chambers heard more evidence between April 24th and 29th. Altogether over eighty witnesses were heard before the Court in Paris, many of them at vast length. General Roget admits he alone spoke for forty-seven hours. Delegations, sub-delegations, and rogatory commissions scoured France for evidence. Letters, reports, extracts from *dossiers* were put in by the ream. The Court took note of the depositions before the first Dreyfus Court-Martial, and those in Picquart's action against Esterhazy, Pays, and Du Paty. Dreyfus himself was examined at the Devil's

Island. In short, the whole case was thrashed out as fine as the law of France could thrash it.

The proceedings make up 1,168 pages. There is no need even to summarise them, since everything has been repeated—in some cases almost textually, in the case of absent witnesses altogether textually—before the Court-Martial at Rennes. The important fact is that on May 27th the Court quashed the conviction of 1894, and ordered a new trial of the case before the Court-Martial of Rennes. The Court could, had it chosen, have declared Dreyfus innocent, but it preferred to give him back to military justice. The grounds of the quashing of the verdict of 1894—and they are important as the chief points for the consideration of the Rennes Court-Martial—were the following :—

(1) The Henry forgery.

(2) Incorrect date ascribed to the *bordereau*.

(3) Contradiction between the opinions of the experts in the Dreyfus case of '94 and the Esterhazy case of '98.

(4) Identity of the thin paper of the *bordereau* with that used by Esterhazy.

(5) Letter of Esterhazy stating that he had been to the manœuvres at the date indicated. Dreyfus did not go to the manœuvres.

(6) A recent police report showing that Dreyfus did not gamble; he was accused of it in 1894 owing to a confusion with relations and others of the same name.

(7) The dramatic scene between Judge Bertulus and Colonel Henry in the former's room, when the judge told the colonel he knew of his guilty doings.

(8) A telegram of 1894 whence it follows that Dreyfus had no dealings with foreign agents.

(9) Another telegram proving Dreyfus had no dealings with foreign Powers.

(10) Documents showing that Dreyfus never confessed his alleged crime.

Such was the wider scope of the inquiry. The exact question put by the Court of Appeal before the Court-Martial was this: Did Dreyfus deliver to a foreign Power the documents enumerated in the *bordereau ?*

Now everything was ready except Dreyfus.

II.

How Dreyfus Came to Rennes.

"It is Rennes?" asked the Frenchman at the opposite corner of the carriage, unwinding himself from his blanket. "It is Rennes, monsieur," answered the little guard. At the word I woke and cast off my moorings also, and staggered down on the platform.

There was nothing to see but the typical French railway station, with its complete roof and low concrete platforms, its walls naked of advertisement, and general air of cold, formal civilisation. Ludgate Hill is a picturesque barn compared with the ordinary railway station of France. The platforms were peopled by half a dozen red-bagged soldiers, a bluejacket or two on the way to Brest, an apple-cheeked peasant girl or two, and a most heavenly smell of hay.

No matter; I was in the emotional centre of France. Here, if anywhere, there would

be something to see and feel. I set forth into the town with a thrill.

It was four o'clock; dawn had broken half an hour ago. It was quite light, with the sober, unillusioned light that precedes sunrise. I looked out for the keen little knots of journalists, gendarmes, Anti-Semites, Dreyfusards, and secret agents who, as I knew, kept Argus-eyes on Rennes railway station from midday to midnight and on to midday again. There was apparently not a single journalist, gendarme, Anti-Semite, Dreyfusard, or secret agent in the place. Nothing at all except the smell of hay and a fluff of rosy clouds and one commissionaire methodically balancing my baggage on a hand-cart. For the rest Rennes was sheer silence and sleep-blind windows and dumb cobblestones. For the moment I was the life of Rennes, the emotional centre of France.

But it will wake up presently, I said. For the moment the Dreyfusards and the Anti-Dreyfusards are taking much-needed rest. So I went to bed and woke up again at eight, sprang to the window—and Rennes

was, if anything, a trifle sounder asleep than before. It was, on the whole, the least excited-looking town I ever saw.

The hotel looks on to a broad street, with a river flowing down the middle of it. From its rigid, stone-walled, iron-railed banks you would judge it a canal, but I am assured it is a river. On its sepia-green water floated a barge, piled up with ladders and planks and scaffold-poles, laboriously towed by three men in webbed cross-belts. Down the twenty feet from street to river led flights of steps here and there, and at the bottom women were washing clothes. The background of this simplicity was such dignified house-architecture as even the provinces of France never fail of—tall, large-windowed, stucco-fronted houses, with high-gabled, grey-slated roofs—houses that convey an air of space and comfort and attention to the amenities of life. But the shutters were all closed against the morning sun; the great doors yawned black and cavernous, but nobody passed in or out. Not a single "*Conspuez*" broke the silence. And was this Rennes?

It was; and that a very clean, leisurely, characteristic, altogether charming bit of provincial France. The first striking difference from an English country town is the size of the houses, their look of airy comfort, and the unearthly cleanness of everything. An English town of the size would display one uneven, bending, irregularly and dingily picturesque High-street, with shop-fronts elbowing each other aside, and a sky-line here four stories high, here two. Here five stories is almost the rule in the main streets, and the stories are themselves higher. The windows rise from floor to ceiling. The stucco might be washed daily, and the square-paved, rough stone streets—abominable for riding or driving or walking—look as though there were no such thing as smoke or mud or any kind of dirt in the world. The straw-hatted workmen or lace-capped workwomen move with easy-minded slowness. Rennes has all the consciousness of civilisation that distinguishes France—the town of a people that has long since learned, as we shall never, to make its first business the agreeable living of life.

Embedded in the suave eighteenth-century amenity are little bits of old Rennes. There is the city gate whereby the Grand Dukes of Brittany used to enter, with defaced escutcheons, with beetle-browed garrets over the arch, and a tiny, slant-roofed, latticed, wooden hutch—derelict from the Middle Ages, when rooms were not built to move in—crouching at its feet. Here you see the over-reaching stories of an old house propping itself between the severe lines of two new ones; there, in a court, an open-fronted, wooden, padoga-built porter's lodge that might have come straight from India. Between the relics puff light street railway-trains—goods trains, mark you, down the main street—and electric tramcars hoot, for nowhere is industrial civilisation more brutally utilitarian than in æsthetic France. Dreyfus returning——

True: I was forgetting Dreyfus. This was June 28th. He was to arrive, said all but official sources, to-night or the first thing to-morrow morning. The enterprise of French and English newspapers had glutted the hotels with correspondents and artists and

operators of cinematographs. We waited for the great moment of the arrival—and waited and waited. "Any news?" was the morning salutation, and there were only two variants in the answer: either "No" or "I have just heard from a good source that Dreyfus has arrived." Everybody was straining every nerve upon waiting—waiting with fierce and concentrated energy.

The strategic waiting-point was about a quarter of a mile of road between the railway station and the military prison. Little crowds—a dozen is a crowd in Rennes—gathered to look at the gate through which, it was by now decided, Dreyfus would not pass from his cell to the trial. Others, especially we correspondents, put in an occasional sentry-go round the prison to make sure that an incalculable Government had not moved it somewhere else in the last half hour. It was uninteresting enough to look at—a high stone wall, with a shapeless stone building rising above it. But the intriguing fact about it was that the yard had two gates, and who could tell through which they would take him? It was some relief to the strain

of this uncertainty that they were within ten yards of each other, so that it was possible for an active man to watch both at the same time. Yet more exciting was an oblong bit of building whence three barred second-story windows appeared above the wall. One (or two) of these lit Dreyfus's cell, and the other two (or one) Du Paty de Clam's. But which—O, spirit of journalism, which?* In this same strategic line, by good luck, was Mme. Godard's house, where Mme. Dreyfus was to stay.

Meanwhile Mme. Godard—who did not know Dreyfus or anybody to do with him, and had taken in his wife out of sheer generosity when everybody else was afraid—was the public character of Rennes, of France, of Europe. That being so, you will readily believe that she might sit for the absolute type of the middle-class French old lady. Small, soft, silver-haired, a trifle wizened, with a slightly projecting under-lip, bustling in manner, gently decided and

* As a matter of fact, neither; Du Paty de Clam was being tried at the moment, but was acquitted on the ground of acting under orders from his superiors.

rapid though a little lisping in speech, breathing homely kindness and energy in every word and gesture—you have seen her on the stage a hundred times. But she was indirectly concerned with Dreyfus, and therefore the heroine of one half of France and the she-devil of the other.

I went there with a friend: she was just going out, and we exchanged, between the three of us, about twenty quite ordinary sentences. We came out just as she drove away. Round the gate, staring passionately at the back of the carriage, stood a huge crowd — at least twenty. A decorated journalist walked quickly up and asked where she was going. One or two enthusiasts ran after the carriage. Truly we live in stirring times.

I, too, must be up and doing—must brace up and go out and wait. The prison gate clamoured to be looked at.

* * * *

June 30th, and we are still waiting for Dreyfus.

I am not quite sure whether, historically

speaking, I have been here two days or three. Spiritually I have been at Rennes nearly all my life. I can hardly remember what happened at the station when I arrived; and I look back at myself in Holborn Viaduct Station last Tuesday—ye gods, how young I was last Tuesday!—as it were through the wrong end of a mile long telescope. Such endless vistas of empty time, such wildernesses of nothing, divide me from last Tuesday. Shall I ever see a Tuesday again?

I seem to know Rennes by heart, every feature of it. The spotless, empty streets; the distant hoot of empty tramcars; the brown-cheeked Breton women, in their little flat white lace caps, kneeling in little boxes in the river, and beating dirty linen on drawing boards with butter patters; the closed doors of the railway station; the blank walls of the prison—I have grown up and grown old among them all. Correspondents of papers in Paris and Chicago, in Madrid and Helsingfors, unheard of yesterday, are to-day my oldest friends. I no longer even smile at the spectacle of a

score of intelligent men patrolling empty streets through the hours of sleep on the chance of seeing for ten seconds a man whom they would not know if they did see him, and who, if they did know him, would not matter. In forty-eight hours Rennes has brought me to this, that I give my whole life to the elaborate and conscientious execution of nothing, and no longer feel a fool.

It is all the eternal instinct of sport, of emulation, of gambling. Implanted in man by an ironical Creator, it leads him ever to expend infinite effort and infinite patience on ends which are only not utterly insignificant because of this very effort and patience that man lavishes on them. This Dreyfus-hunt of ours is on the exact level of a dumpling-eating competition, or of betting on the colour of the next horse that turns into St. James's Street. It is no earthly good to Dreyfus or to France or to you—[There goes that cavalry subaltern again. He rides up the street every day at a quarter to three, and back again at a quarter to four; I suppose he has been doing it since the

creation of the world]—and least of all is it any good to us. But because we have begun it, and the others do it, we all do it, and go on doing it.

In this desert of waiting, the one oasis—the arrival of Madame Dreyfus—attained the rank of a public event of first-class importance. When the unfortunate woman arrived one afternoon in Rennes, she found the station quite full of men and women waiting to look at her. On the platform were the Director of the Political Police and his second-in-command, the Prefect, the whole Press of Paris and of most of the civilised world. Outside the station was a crowd of a couple of hundred or so—I suppose the vastest assembly of human beings Rennes had ever seen. Between them walked the dolorous procession of wife and relations to the shelter of Madame Godard's. "Hisses resound," said the local Anti-Dreyfusard organ next day, "a few are found who raise the hat before the wife of the traitor." "Hats fly off," said the local Dreyfusard organ; "a few are found who hiss the sublime figure of suffering woman." As a

fact, nobody much was found who did anything but stare. After the garden gate was shut a man's straw hat was visible above it; I do not know whether or not there was a head beneath the hat, but Rennes and Paris and good part of the world stared at it conscientiously for half an hour.

As for Dreyfus, whom we were there for, there was no reason why, for all our vigilance, we should see him come, if the authorities did not wish it, or even why he should come just now at all.

Our only hope was in the dramatic instincts of the French officials. The French official could not waste his Dreyfus. A closed carriage drives rapidly up to the prison at the dead of night—four cloaked figures inside, two on the box. One springs down, goes swiftly to the postern and utters a pass-word. The double gate springs open, the carriage wheels and clatters in, the gates roll back—*Comme ça!* Bravo, Messieurs the authorities!

It was the object, therefore, of the journalistic world—which appeared to be about 95 per cent. of the population of Rennes:

you assumed that every man you met in hotel or café was a journalist—to be on the spot at this sublime moment. With this view we employed our day as follows.

The morning hardly counts; in this kind of life the morning is really the end of the day before. We really begin to live about breakfast time, which is twelve o'clock. We go down to the dining-room of the hotel and enter with a polite obeisance to the company. There are a few ladies, a couple of officers, some townspeople and a student or two. At ordinary times I imagine they form little islands at the big centre table and the round side tables; but in these days the intervening space is overrun and fused with a lava of correspondents.

"Good day, *confrère*. Any news? They say that this man has arrived during the night. He would be in the prison now. But I, I do not believe it."

"Nor I. It will be for to-night. Listen! I have learned that the Commissary of Police left yesterday in the direction of Brest by the train due——"

And so on. In the intervals we are fed

with a most enormous meal of radishes, anchovies, cold veal—cold veal by way of an appetiser!—fish, eggs, ragout of mutton and haricot beans, beef steak and potatoes, a sort of Breton junket and sugar, cherries and green almonds. That over we stagger out to the café. *Confrères* from other hotels drop in; we read the papers and talk. We talk of the arrival of Dreyfus. As soon as digestion allows, we start off by single twos or threes to look at the prison, to look at the railway station, to look at Madame Godard's. All these thoroughly looked at, the keener spirits steal away to interview, if possible, the brother-in-law of Dreyfus, the friend of Madame Godard, the man who knows the leader of the local Anti-Dreyfusards, the gendarme on guard at the railway station. The slacker sort sit, as it seems to me, outside the café all the afternoon, occasionally rising to go to the telegraph office, which was providently built next door to the café, to send to their papers a short article on the return of Dreyfus. For me, I return to the hotel to write.

[Here comes that cavalry subaltern again.

I suppose he has been to the end of the world and back again.]

I go out to the café again. The *confrères* are there, if possible in greater numbers than ever. There is a band playing—I feel as though I had known the lady who takes round the napkin-covered plate in a previous existence—but there is nothing to drink except sticky, sweet syrups, which are bad for the body, and vermouth, which is bad for the soul, and absinthe, which is bad for both; and there is nothing to do but talk—an occupation I detest. Presently, thank Heaven, it is dinner-time—soup, anchovy, cold veal, fish, duck, mutton, beef, chicken, pudding, ice, macaroons, strawberries, cherries, and green almonds.

Out to the café again. Again the band is playing and the lady taking round the plate and wrapping up our talents in a napkin. Coffee, cognac, tobacco, talk. At eleven or so the Anglo-American part of the company goes to the *café chantant;* to the more experienced French it is so dull that it is even duller than the café. There is a large room with plenty of gas, a stage with a faded

scene apparently representing Fujiyama or the Bay of Naples or something, and a lady singing a song of which I can only understand the refrain—rum-tum-tum, rum-tum-tum. Will no one tell me what she sings? Certainly they will, most readily, and then I understand that my curiosity was almost indelicate. Grouped about the room are about eight ladies in skirts and portions of bodices; every now and then one of them disappears through a door, appears on the stage and sings a song. The only person that really interests me at the *café chantant* is the orchestra. He is a solitary pianist in a cloth cap, which he never takes off. I should say he was young from the look of his back, but he never turns round. He never speaks or moves or looks at the stage or even shifts his cap; he just accompanies, like a machine. I wonder whether he knows that, barring the performers, there are not ten people in the place, and of those five foreigners.

By now it is near twelve, and the real Dreyfus-hunt begins. Some have long installed themselves in a café near the station,

but about this time the café people want to go to bed. So out into the street turns everybody—and waits. The few last inhabitants stump up the street singing and disappear. Silence comes down over the town. We stroll slowly round and round and round the prison. Not a soul, not a sound. Yes, what is that in the dark gateway? There emerge three cloaked mysterious figures. Hist! Where are they going? Who are they? One turns and moves as if to speak. "*Bon soir, confrères!*" falls cheerfully on the darkness.

Round again, round again, round and round and round. A sound of voices falls on the ear; it is only a group of *confrères* exchanging calculations as to the probable speed of a special train from Brest—or elsewhere—to Rennes. But hark! there is the rattle of a carriage: on these paving-stones you can hear it the other side of the town. Nearer and nearer—ah, it has turned off—no, it is coming down here; there is the lamp. This way! It is going straight for the prison door; run, or you will miss him. It stops at the very gate; a cloaked figure

springs nimbly out. "*Bon soir, confrères!*" he affably remarks.

It will be for to-morrow.

* * * *

"At last! This time it is official. It will be for to-night at two o'clock."

From *confrère* to *confrère* ran the joyful news. At last he really was arriving, and in future there would be a reasonable chance of sleep at night. Before dinner, as we sat in the everlasting café, there came fresh confirmation in a huge black paragraph in one of the local newspapers. He was coming from the direction of Lorient by a special train, arriving at 2.4. Why they, being but journalists, should know better than we, I cannot say; but they had the moral advantage of being in print first. Everybody was now quite certain. The *confrères* girded themselves for a final vigil.

Nor was it the Press alone. Before this fateful Friday we had had the town and the night to ourselves. But when, at nine or so, we arrived at the little *café chantant* opposite the railway station—it was too risky, we told

ourselves, to go to-night to the usual one in the town—it was doing such business as surely was never done in Rennes before. Every table was full: the steam of drying clothes—it was raining cats and dogs outside—filled the place with the climate of a saucepan.

Such of the company as were not journalists were mostly students—the wonderful student of France, so wildly opposed to all our ideas of an undergraduate. The French student will wear, and think nothing of it, a frock coat unbuttoned off a green and violet checked shirt, bicycling knickerbockers, and yellow buttoned boots; the loose loops of his tie cover his whole chest; his hat will be white and brown plaited straw, with a red and black ribbon bearing a firmament of black and red stars. His untrimmed beard makes him look thirty instead of twenty-two, which he is; and his clay pipe suggests that he hopes to be taken for a working man. None the less, he is a courteous and good-hearted gentleman, and a very prince of hospitality. So for that matter, to French stranger and foreign stranger alike, is every inhabitant of Rennes I have met.

The parboiled crowd lent but a languid ear to the performers, though the plate which each brought round after each effort was filled with pennies beyond the dreams of benefits. All applauded with one ear cocked to the splashing of the rain outside. From time to time one would rise and mysteriously disappear, returning in twenty minutes with a dutiful air that suggested a visit to the telegraph office. The slacker of us were content with the eternal talk on the eternal subject. Perhaps he will be before his time; we must leave nothing to chance. Will he come to the station, to the arsenal, to the little gate by the barracks of the 10th Cavalry, to some place down the line? Better follow the *Figaro*; he is sure to know. Better follow the *Temps*. The *Matin*, too, has good information. Better concentrate on the prison. Only at which gate?

Let us take a turn now and see if anything is moving. Was there not a rumour after all that he might arrive as early as eleven? It was still raining, though less resolutely. Round and round the block of buildings we patrolled; there was not a light within nor a

sound; only from the neighbouring tan-yard a dog howled violently. Round the whole circuit—perhaps a quarter of a mile of irregular quadrangle—there was no sign, except other prowlers on the same quest as ourselves. But what is that? Tramp, tramp, tramp — a squad of gendarmes emerging from a by-street and patrolling also. Now last night and the night before there was never a sign of a gendarme; surely that must mean business.

Minutes drip by with the rain; a quarter of an hour becomes a half. Nothing new—only what is that white flash of light down by the station? Figures start out of the dark and begin to stream hurriedly down the road; then check one after another, and turn back with short laughs. It is only one of the photographers taking a flash-light picture of the crowd at the café. It is the end of the evening there; the crowd has turned out and comes strolling up the road to the prison. Midnight, and the rain is dying off. For the rest of the time, at least, we shall be dry.

The crowd was now complete—perhaps

three hundred of it. The journalists walked round unceasingly in twos and threes; the students and the rest fixed on what they thought a likely point and stayed there. There are doors in all four sides of the block of buildings, and, they said, Dreyfus might be taken in at any one of them. At any corner of the building a man could command two sides, as far as the gas lamps would let him; two could command the whole, and three could signal to each other an approach on any side. But these strategic considerations were only for journalists; the irresponsible crowd preferred to keep all together. So they collected in the main street, at the corner nearest to the railway station, and smoked, and joked, and waited.

One o'clock was long past, and as it began to draw near 2.4, some nerves began to tighten and quiver. On other nights the wheels of a cab on the cobbles had been as an alarm bugle; to-night the first cab brought on a wild stampede. But that was only for the first; to-night cabs were quite common. Each charged with journalists, they rumbled from the prison to the tele-

graph office, and from the telegraph office to the station, and from the station to the arsenal, and from the arsenal back to the prison again. Two o'clock; 2.4, and not a sign. Half-past, and a cab came back from the telegraph office with news. A despatch from Paris said that he had certainly landed, and would certainly come. Another story, purporting to be from the railway station, said that the special had broken down.

The crowd had left its first corner now, and collected at the opposite one, close to the actual gate of the military prison—the likeliest place, you would have said, if only it had not been so obvious. The crowd was apparently beginning to get a little tired of it. Three o'clock and half-past—it would be broad daylight in half an hour. Already the background of the sullen clouds was a little lighter. A cock crew inside the prison.

Ugh! It began to grow cold with the keen wind of dawn. Everybody was growing silent; the wet was soaking through their boots; their feet were galled on the

cobbles. Hardly anybody was walking now, hardly anybody talking. The blue-black sky was tinged with violet now, and the scent of hay stole on to the air. Turn one way, and you were in the lightening, freshening, chaste-coloured dawn; the other, and you saw a silent clump of black people motionless in an island of yellow glare from one gas lamp. There is always something of a miracle in daybreak—the new light and life creeping in on you so imperceptibly till suddenly you are astonished that the night has vanished without warning. Here the sensation was underlined; it was almost indecent, almost a monstrosity, that this black group in the garish light remained just as they were last night and refused to be transfigured with the rest of the world.

But that for another season; meanwhile what on earth has become of Dreyfus? The change from night to day woke everybody up to the truth that they had waited and he had not come. What does it mean? Where are the leading journalists? Perhaps at the telegraph, perhaps at the station; anyhow not here. It grows lighter

and lighter; they would never bring him in by daylight. A cab drives up from the station, stops; a head is put out to speak, and instantly the whole crowd is about it. The officials at the station are bowled over; they cannot understand it. The special train was to come—has not. The prefect's secretary has gone home. And as the cab, perplexed and frantic, clatters off towards the telegraph, there stamp along the pavement the clogs of the first working-man.

Another disappointment. The merely curious had begun to drain away with the first breath of day; now the crowd melted quicker and quicker, till hardly more than a score were left. "Two nights without sleep," grumbles a white-faced correspondent. "Five," corrects him one who can hardly keep his eyes open. Well, we must resign ourselves. And yet—and yet there seems no doubt he started. The streets are filling up fast now with workpeople and carts, yet the prison gate is quite solitary. I will take this end, you that; give him another hour.

As I stood alone—the one left of hundreds—and watched the gate, it stealthily half-

opened. A gendarme put his head out, then put it back. Then it opened again; an officer put his head out and put it back. After all, what was there in that? A gendarme appeared round the street corner, knocked at the gate, went in, came out again in a moment, and went away. After all, why should not a gendarme have business in a prison? Quarter to six, nearly six, and, O Lord, I'm sleepy. This really is getting too—— Hi! A yell from the watcher at the other end of the street, and he whips out of sight round the corner. As I am getting started after him, he whips back again, a tearing crowd at his heels. Heavens, they are coming to my corner! I tear back and round—and he is come!

Two carriages are driving rapidly towards me. And the dead-walled street, ten seconds ago so empty that you would say nobody had passed down it since it was made, is swarming full of gendarmes. Out of doors, down from windows, over walls, out of the very ground, it seems, they spring and scamper. A frantic cry from one of the carriages, and both check to let the gendarmes

get in front. The first dashes past me, screaming, "Move on! move on!" hardly articulate in his excitement. His fellows rush up just in time to meet the crowd rushing up from the other way. They form a line across the street, and make a barrier of carbines held athwart their bodies. They are all as pale as death—all licking lips dry with excitement. Back! Move on! Back, back! A little man in a sweater appears behind them, in command, he, too, screaming "Back, back!" The carriages now appear again round the corner; the gate in this street is suddenly seen to be open. The closed landau rolls in; men jump from the second and rush in after it. Gendarmes still on your toes, public still on your heels, "Back, back!" still bawled down your throat—and the door is shut, and Dreyfus is inside. The gendarmes halt and are silent; their cordon bars the street. The crowd resumes its old occupation of looking intently at nothing.

Nine hours of watching, two minutes of seeing. But two minutes of seeing almost worth watching for—the best conceived, neatest, quickest bit of stage-management in

the history of government. You rubbed your eyes and wondered if it was real; at a word you would almost have resumed watching again.

Bravo, Messieurs the authorities! We had seen everything except Dreyfus.

III.

On the Eve.

Paris was changed. There was the August stench of the streets—less evenly spread, but even intenser than London's. The gasping drinkers on the boulevards, the perspiring eaters in the restaurants, seemed sparser than they had been. And the approach to the Montparnasse railway station—whence the railway train shied into the street—was like a pass when the baggage of an army is shoving through. The only way to have got up quickly would have been to hop along the roofs of the cabs.

Everybody was off out of Paris—to St. Malo, to Dinard, to Granville; and seemingly everybody was off by the same train. At the ticket-windows the first joint of the tail seized the occasion to discuss exhaustively with the lady inside the particular kind of

cheap return which he would do best to take, and doubled the delay by submitting each point to female relations outside the barrier. I had a moment's horrible suspicion that all were going to the trial of Dreyfus.

Then Rennes—but Rennes unchanged—if possible, more unchanged than ever. And as after three days there before I felt as if I had lived there all my life, so now after three hours I feel as if I had never been away. London? Paris? No; I have been there, but I cannot remember them. But Rennes—the sepia-green canal-river that runs down the main street before the hotel, the square-cobbled, rattling streets, the half-empty trolley-cars, the brown-cheeked Breton women kneeling on their washing-boards in the stream, the blue-bloused Breton men hauling on tow-ropes, the sauntering black-gowned shovel-hatted priests, the great placid blue boar-hounds, the tight-closed shutters of the big yellow houses, the utter desolation of cleanness—O, yes, I know it all—have known it since the beginning of time. And what an astonishing contrast—the Dreyfus case and Rennes! If one thing

more was needed to throw the poignant drama into relief, it was the dead silence of this dead town in which it was played.

The blank-faced railway station, the blind-eyed prison, the eight-course breakfast, the sips at the café, the voluble, bearded fellow-correspondents—all exactly as I left them. Except that the *confrères* this time are more numerous than ever.

We filled every hotel, every boarding-house, every furnished lodging, every restaurant, almost every shop. On the Saturday night of August 5th they were even enlarging the café. It was not a complicated operation; the patron himself seized the shrubs in tubs that form its outer walls, and pulled them forward into the square until his premises were enlarged by a third. From the state of the ground where the bottoms of the tubs had been, I conjecture that the café never saw such an event before.

The *confrères* themselves were from every corner of the reading world; and they looked it. They had a pleasant legend that Saturday afternoon that twelve Turkish journalists had arrived and found one seat allotted to

the dozen. There were British and American correspondents who knew their business—so much so that in a week both the leading cafés of Rennes had laid in a stock of what they miscalled Scotch whisky—and there were correspondents from Sweden and Russia who neither would nor could correspond at all. There was a Spanish Anarchist—a quiet, gentlemanly fellow—who had made his name by firing on the police at Barcelona. There was a placid, infantile, middle-aged journalist from Japan. Every correspondent who came from Germany or Austria had added to that injury the insult of being also a Jew. No less than three of them piled up the supreme outrage of being named Dreyfus.

But the French *confrères* were still the most outlandish. For the typical Parisian life is a perpetual masquerade; he must always be appearing as something. One came as a bicyclist, in a flannel shirt over an expansive stomach and Madame's bloomers; he had a bicycle, but never rode it. Another came as an automobilist, in gaiters and an oil-cloth cap; he had probably never more than smelt an automobile. A French Swiss

came as a mountaineer; you expected daily to see him in court with an ice-axe. Several, finding themselves within a couple of hours of the sea, appeared as yachtsmen. A few were disguised as Englishmen. Their ways were as wonderful as their garb. Most of them were very siphons of frothing excitement all through the trial. They collected news mainly from each other; they could have done just as well without any trial or any Dreyfus. One little man especially commanded my admiration. He was never idle, and never did anything, was always hurrying somewhere, and never got anywhere. He was like a wasp under a tumbler, surrounded by invisible walls which prevented him from ever getting to the place he started for. He would spring up agitatedly in the middle of nothing, dash himself violently into the invisible wall, turn and rebound swiftly in the opposite direction, rebound again, sink into a chair, spring up again, rebound again. He ricocheted thus off nothing for five weeks without pause.

On Saturday afternoon they allotted us tickets in the Bourse de Commerce. At

ordinary times the Bourse de Commerce seems to be like a corn exchange, except that there seems to be no corn and no exchanging; to-day it was a mixture of the examination schools at Oxford and the gallery door of a music-hall. In part of it they were hammering together rows of little desks with a noise that left you doubting whether the hammer hit the nail or your own ear; this was to transform the place into a hall of correspondence. For Rennes, hospitable in this as in all things, put its Bourse de Commerce, because there was no room in the telegraph office, at the disposal of the Press. In another part sat five gentlemen behind a table with lists and tickets. A swollen torrent of *confrères* surged in the doorway, barely restrained by a suave little old gentleman, who assured them that if they would only wait patiently for three hours everybody would be served. Five by five they struggled in and received their passes. Parisians and provincials, agencies and foreigners from San Francisco to Yokohama, each rightly felt that unless his own particular organ knew all there was to know the greatest

State trial of the century would be but a toad-in-the-hole after all. Especially we foreigners groaned because we were allotted half a ticket each instead of a whole one. But, after all, it was France's Dreyfus trial and not ours; we had no right to so much as a seat every other day. The only thing was that there was really plenty of room in the Press seats if only it had been better distributed. The *Times*, *Morning Post* and *Daily News*, the *New York Journal* and *Neue Freie Presse* had only half a ticket; the *Aftonbladet* of I don't know where had two whole ones, and, as far as anybody could see, used neither. One lucky London paper found that it had to share its ticket with the *National Liberal Club*, a publication which did not put in an appearance. Others were coupled up with *Various*, whose correspondent was also absent.

Here was again the amazing contrast between the straining interest of the world, embodied in its reporters, and that phlegmatic indifference of Rennes. On the eve of the trial you saw nothing new but journalists.

Witnesses there must be by now, no doubt; there was one in shining garments at lunch, who could not be less than a general, and might be as much as the custodian of the secret *dossier*. Others, no doubt, there were, but till the last moment we did not see them. Advocates were here too; and the prisoner was always here in the scantily furnished cell behind the barred windows. The back streets round the prison, which used to be thronged every night like a fair, were quite empty. Only the clustering journalists, one or two at every table, one or two strolling in every street, stood for the tense expectation of a whole civilisation.

The note was silent, tight-strung expectation. The very journalists were less full of rumours than they were last time. The populace was made of apathy. France—Paris itself—was all but calm.

In dead silence the curtain was to go up on the last act of the great drama. And what a climax! We should have all the actors on the scene—Ministers, officers, experts in writing, simple citizens, accusers themselves accused, disinterested champions of truth,

relatives fighting for their kin, traitor and patriot, victim and assassin. We should have every motive of melodrama—treachery, forgery, prison, suicide, lawful and unlawful love, conspiracies, cryptograms, the bureaux of secret services in the foreground and the palisade of Devil's Island for the back-scene. The voice of a great nation was the chorus, and the issue her distraction or her peace.

And we were to see and hear the accused—the greatest figure in France, which no one knew. The name of Dreyfus was known more widely than those of heroes and sages; yet who knew so much as whether he was handsome or plain, brilliant or stupid, good or bad? He was the most talked-of man in the world, and had himself forgotten how to talk—the most famous man in the world, and the world knew nothing of him. The mighty blank! And in two days the world would have begun to fill him in!

IV.

DREYFUS.

THE Trial was to begin at half-past six. It wanted a quarter of an hour of the time when a line of mounted gendarmes, pushing the crowd out of the neighbouring streets, proclaimed that they were taking Dreyfus across the road from the military prison to the High School, in whose lecture-hall he was to be arraigned.

A moment later the line opened, and the crowd of journalists, waving their passes, pushed through. They jammed in at a narrow door, up stone steps, through another doorway, round a corner, inside a cordon of infantry, and they were in the court. It was a lofty, oblong, buff-plastered hall larger than the Prince's Restaurant, smaller than St. James's Hall. With large windows on each side—square in the lower tier, circular in the upper—it was almost as light as the

day outside; round the cornice were emblazoned the names of Chateaubriand, Lamennais, Renan, and the intellectuals of Brittany. At the top was a stage, its front filled with a long table, behind this seven crimson-covered seats for the judges. A white Christ on a black cross, hanging on the back wall above the President's chair, proclaimed the place a Court of Justice. On the right, as you faced the stage, were a small raised table and seats for the counsel of the accused; on the left a similar erection for the prosecuting Commissary of the Government and his assistants. Down each side of the body of the hall was a strip of extemporised match-board bench-and-desk for the Press. In the broader centre were seats for the witnesses, then, behind a bar, for the favoured public. Behind all this ran another bar lined by a guard of the 41st Infantry. Behind their homely peasant faces and between their fixed bayonets peered the general public, five deep, in the shallowest of strips at the very back of the hall.

The Press stampeded and trampled over the match-board, and in the fulness of time

sorted itself into its appointed places. The general public shifted and scrunched behind the barrier. The centre of the hall began to fill up with witnesses, with officers of infantry in red pantaloons and gunners in black. Behind the dais appeared a sprinkling of selected spectators. Then, on the waxing bustle of the hall, came lawyers in black gowns with little white-edged tippets and white bands, with queer high black caps like birettas. Now we should see. And next moment—it was already past seven—there was a hoarse cry from behind—present arms!—rattle—and there filed in the seven officers in whose hands rests the conscience of France. The President—a small but soldierly man in eye-glasses, with black hair and a small face all huge white moustache and imperial—saluted and sat down. Bring in the accused.

Instantly the black, rippling hall is still as marble, silent as the grave. The sergeant usher went to a door—the tramp of his feet was almost startling—on the right hand of the top of the hall. It opened and two officers stepped out. One of them was the

greatest villain or the greatest victim in France—and for the moment men wondered which was he. It seemed almost improper that the most famous man in the world was walking in just as you or I might.

Then all saw him, and the whole hall broke into a gasp. There came in a little old man—an old, old man of thirty-nine. A small-statured, thick-set old man in the black uniform of the artillery; over the red collar his hair was gone white as silver, and on the temples and at the back of the crown he was bald. As he turned to face the judges there was a glimpse of a face both burned and pale—a rather broad, large-featured face with a thrusting jaw and chin. It was not Jewish in expression until you saw it in profile. The eyes under the glasses were set a trifle close together, and not wholly sympathetic either; you might guess him hard, stubborn, cunning. But this was only guessing: what we did see in the face was suffering and effort—a misery hardly to be borne, and a tense, agonised striving to bear and to hide it. Here is a man, you would say, who has endured things unendur-

able, and just lives through—maybe to endure more.

He walked up two steps to his seat with a gait full of resolve yet heavy, constrained, mechanical — such a gait as an Egyptian mummy might walk with if it came to life in its swathing grave-clothes. He saluted the President with a white-gloved hand, took off his képi, sat down. An officer of gendarmes followed and sat down behind him. The Registrar, rising from beside the prosecuting officer, read out the general order constituting the court; then the white moustache and imperial twitched as the President, in a small voice, put a question to the prisoner. Another sudden stillness: then came the voice of Dreyfus. No one heard what it said—thin, sapless, split, it was such as might rustle from the lips of a corpse.

What he had said was, "Alfred Dreyfus; Captain of Artillery; thirty-nine years." With these three common phrases he broke the silence of four years and a half. Nothing could be more formal, and yet here in the first five minutes of the trial was summed up the whole incredibly romantic history.

Alfred Dreyfus — five years ago nobody knew there was such a name in the world; now the leading comic singer of Paris, who was born with it, has changed it because it is too embarrassingly famous. Captain of Artillery—and generals who have led armies in the presence of the enemy have lost their commands because of him. Thirty-nine years—and here were men who were known before he was born staking their ripe reputations for or against him. Sitting within ten yards of him were Casimir-Perier, the only living ex-Chief of the State in which he was a simple unit; Mercier, Billot, Cavaignac, Zurlinden, Chanoine—five successive heads, and half a dozen generals besides, of the army in which he was an unregarded subordinate; Hanotaux, the Minister who for years has conducted foreign relations in which he could never have dreamed of figuring—all there because he was. Novelists like Prévost and Mirbeau, essayists like Maurice Barrès, philosophers like Max Nordau, French journalists like Arthur Meyer and Cornély, foreign journalists who linked the whole world together—they

had all come to see him. There were men like Picquart and Lebrun-Renault, nobodies when last he knew and spoke with them—now famous in two continents just because they had known and spoken with him. Most dramatic of all, there was a little, close-veiled woman in black—Madame Henry—a woman he had never seen, widow of a man whom he never knew, yet who had risen to celebrity and fallen to an infamous death because of him.

What did he think of such a miracle, such an irony? To all appearances he did not think of it at all. He sat rigid and upright, hugging his chair close with back and legs and feet, his hands folded to the képi on his knees. He was concentrating all the energies of a mind starved for five years on the answers he would presently make to the charges against him. He had time, for there followed over two hours of technicality. There was a flicker of interest when they read out the names of the witnesses, and these rose in their places to cry "Present!" The curious might see the backs of all the most famous heads in France.

But neither Du Paty de Clam nor Esterhazy, suspected traitor and certain scoundrel, answers to his name. After that short flicker comes a brief adjournment; the judges go out and the prisoner too.

It is getting stuffy in court, and we begin to remember that we got up at five. As a change from yawning, all go out into the sunny courtyard; and here, among gendarmes and infantry, you can look closer at the witnesses and chief persons—a living handbook to the Dreyfus case. You may note that General de Boisdeffre looks distinguished and soldierly, General Mercier hardly more lifelike than Dreyfus, M. Cavaignac, narrow-faced and narrow-chested, like a schoolmaster —which is exactly what he ought to have been, and delivered aphorisms on virtue. Picquart is disappointing; his civilian clothes fit him shockingly; but presently you see that his face wears a large expression, tolerant and reasonable. There are many more — Mathieu Dreyfus, the prisoner's brother, with an open, capable Alsatian face; reporter-poets from Paris—you would not know their names — by the half-dozen,

showing every cut of beard from a second moustache bordering the whole underlip to a growth that covers a waistcoat. Of the counsel, Maître Demange, who defended Dreyfus in '94, looks the rubicund yet rather sour type of a lawyer all the world over. But Maître Labori, the advocate of Zola, is the most attractive figure in court. He is fair-haired, fair-bearded, with something of the look of a Norseman and all of the build. He tops his colleagues by the head; his chest is vast both in breadth and depth; his every movement is that of a good-humoured giant overflowing with energy and force.

Tinkle goes the bell; judges and prisoner come in again. The Registrar reads the Act of Accusation of the first trial; it is long, and has been public property for a year and a half—and we got up at five. But when it is over comes the moment of the day. The President addresses the prisoner in a voice suave yet sharp, and Dreyfus stands up. He is round-shouldered, yet he stands bolt upright, and looks his judge hard in the face. A paper is handed to him—the *bordereau*, at

once the act and evidence of treachery. Did he write that ?

Again an instant's dead silence—and then again the dry, split, dead man's voice. It is the voice of a man who has forgotten how to speak, who is struggling desperately to master tones which crumble and fail him. The voice rises—half a shriek and half a sob. But the words you hear are, "I am innocent, my colonel." Then the colonel's soft tones again and more answers. The brake of the 120 millimetre gun, the artillery firing-manual, Dreyfus's journeys to Alsace, a suggested trip to Brussels, his relations with an Austrian mistress, his alleged confession—a string of cross-examination. It is difficult to follow the questions; but after five minutes the answers are heard in every corner of the hall. He has found his voice, and it is thick and full. No; no, my colonel; never; I never played; I do not know him; I never said so—the denials follow on the questions sharply, instantly, eagerly. Now and again a white-gloved hand is raised in emphasis, while the white left-hand fingers twitch on the képi. Now and again comes a

sentence—precipitate, almost breathless, as if he feared to lose one second of his chance to be heard. Every moment his back stiffens, his voice deepens, his hand is raised more appealingly, his protestations burst out more fervently. It is a man fighting for his life against time.

V.

MERCIER.

THE second and third and fourth and fifth days of the Dreyfus case were devoted to the study of the secret papers bearing on the matter. They had been brought from Paris by General Chamoin on behalf of the Minister of War. They consisted, as we heard, of nearly six hundred documents, dealing with the subject more or less relevantly. It seems an enormous collection, but you must remember that for several years the French War Office has done nothing to speak of except collect documents dealing more or less relevantly with the Dreyfus case.

Four days, therefore, the eager journalist had to spend outside the court, for of course the secret *dossier* was considered behind closed doors. It was some consolation later

that everything in it of any moment, including confidential cryptograms and names of secret agents, was cheerfully divulged to the whole world. In the meantime some got up at five to see Dreyfus march across the street from his prison to the court; some frequented the doormats of Demange and Labori in the vain hope of an indiscretion: others, less avid of excitement, were content to watch the case from the nearest and most agreeable watering-place.

But everything comes to him who waits, and in due time came Saturday, August 12th. We entered the hall at 6.29—the hall of the Lycée had the property of everything else in Rennes, that immediately you seem to have known it all your life—and awaited the first witness. This was a dapper young diplomatist called Laroche-Vernet, and his evidence at the moment was utterly incomprehensible. It was plainly the continuation of the four days' discussion of the secret *dossier*, and seemed to have to do with a cipher telegram from Colonel Panizzardi to his chiefs in Rome. It seemed to have been intercepted and deciphered, and there seemed to have been

two versions communicated by the French Foreign Office to the War Office. The first, a provisional one, ran :—

"Captain Dreyfus, who has not had relations with Germany, is arrested. If he has had no relations with you in Rome send official denial. Emissary warned."

The second, and only official, version sent to the War Office, substituted for the words "emissary warned" the words "to avoid press comment." In the course of weeks we saw the importance of this; for the moment the great Dreyfus trial seemed to be opening a little tamely.

But next came M. Casimir-Perier. Now we should have something! The more sanguine Dreyfusards built enormously on the ex-President. He resigned in 1894, they said, because he knew that Dreyfus was innocent; now he will prove it. M. Casimir-Perier came up—the brilliant man who never went wrong, who was a distinguished officer at twenty-three, who was President of the Republic at fifty-four, who is beloved by everybody about him—a smallish man, with an open candid face, a very long drooping

moustache, and an extraordinarily broad top to his head. He lifted his hand to the cross and swore to tell the truth, the whole truth, without hate or fear—then began. His elocution was pleasing, his gestures free and attractive, his matter—yes; what about his matter? As period rolled out after period it began to strike us that M. Casimir-Perier was saying nothing about the Dreyfus case at all. He had come here not to say what he knew of the Dreyfus case, but to complain that he, then Chief of the State, knew nothing. The spoiled child of fortune had come only to propitiate his wounded self-esteem. It suddenly occurred to the more sanguine Dreyfusards that if he had been able to prove Dreyfus innocent he would have done it, without resigning, five years ago.

An hour and a-half of giving evidence; total evidence given—none. But then came General Mercier. The hall thrilled to silence as the neat figure went up to the bar and took the oath. Mercier was the real prosecutor of Dreyfus, and at the same time he was really on his own defence.

It was certain that in sending secret documents to the 1894 Court-Martial he had brought himself under the criminal law. He could save himself by an overwhelming proof of the prisoner's guilt, and that was what his partisans were expecting him to do. "I will tell all—all," he had repeated again and again. He began to speak. Now!

He spoke and spoke and spoke. He gave evidence for three hours and a-half, and at the end we were not a foot more advanced than we were at the beginning. Mercier's evidence explained nothing—but Mercier's personality suggested whole volumes. He said hardly more than Casimir-Perier, and said it a great deal less clearly; but the very obscurity hinted at possibilities immeasurable. It was characteristic of the man that his deposition dealt largely with the cryptic methods of the bureau of espionage. And yet, though he revealed secret after secret with an amazing audacity of indiscretion, his revelation was itself so cryptic that we knew no more of their bearing after he had discoursed for an hour than when he began. Mercier's personality strikes the note of the

whole Dreyfus case. Looking at his back as he gave evidence—tall, straight and slim—you could have called him soldierly and suspected him stupid. On his face and neck the bronzed skin hangs loosely. There is neither depth of cranium nor height of forehead to hold a brain in. The eyes are slits with heavy-curtained lids and bags beneath them that turn the drooping cheeks into caverns. A little moustache and beard frame thin lips that might be evil, sensuous, humorous, but could never be human. If you look at his head you think him a vulture; if at his face you call him a mummy. He speaks in a slow, passionless monotone; his gestures are calculated to follow his words instead of proceeding, as a Frenchman's should, along with them, on the same impulse. When he was interrupted by Casimir-Perier he persisted in his assertions with the dogged mumble of a schoolboy detected in a lie. As he sat and strove to wind the toils of treason round the prisoner he seemed as unmoved by hate as by pity; he accused him dully, as if repeating a lesson. Cold, deliberate, tortuous, thorough yet ineffective, verbose but

not candid, battling bravely with native stupidity, truly believing himself to be doing God's work, fearless of responsibility, untouched by anger or pity, fear or hope either for others or for himself—General Mercier was the very type and mirror of a Jesuit Grand Inquisitor.

He burrowed at once into the *dossier*. He had held no official position since 1896, yet he seemed to have copies of all the country's most confidential archives in his pocket. The most important documents he read, by way of proving, first, that there was treachery abroad in 1894, and second, that the traitor was Dreyfus. First came what they call the "doubt proof" document—the translation of a cipher telegram of December 29th, 1893; it was from von Schwarzkoppen to his Government. I give it in English, and, as the interpretation is doubtful, without punctuation :—

Doubt proof officer's brevet situation dangerous for me with French officer not conduct negotiations personally brings what he has absolute * * * [*a blank here*]. *bureau des renseignements* [*this in French*] no relation regiments importance only coming from Ministry already somewhere else.

Schwarzkoppen, explained Mercier, was answering a criticism that his secret information bears no guarantee that it comes from the General Staff. He replies that he has got, or will get, proof in the spy's officer's brevet, that it is better to have no relations with a mere regimental officer, but that the only important information is to be had from the Ministry of War. Finally he adds that the spy has already worked for Germany somewhere else. This last point is interesting, commented Mercier, because Dreyfus is also accused of having betrayed the melinite and Robin shells when he was at the School of Pyrotechnic at Bourges.

The next document is called "the Davignon letter"; it is from Panizzardi to Schwarzkoppen:—

I have just written again to Colonel Davignon. If you have a chance to speak of the question to your friend, be careful to do so in such a way that Davignon shall not know of it.

This concerned an unimportant question as to recruiting, but it shows that Schwarzkoppen had a friend in the second bureau of the General Staff, and that the attachés did

not wish Davignon to know it. Dreyfus was in the second bureau during the first half-year of 1894.

Next is another letter of about the same date from Panizzardi, saying he was about to get the military organization of the French railways. Now Dreyfus was in the fourth bureau, which dealt with railways, during the second half of 1893.

After that the celebrated "*canaille de D—*" letter, apparently from Schwarzkoppen:

16 *April*, 1894.

MY DEAR FRIEND,

Herewith twelve plans which that cad D—— gave me for you. I told him that I had no intention of resuming relations. He said there was a misunderstanding. . . . . I told him he was mad, and that I did not believe you would resume relations with him. Do what you like. . . .

ALEXANDRINE.

It has been said, commented Mercier, that so valuable a spy as Dreyfus would not be called a cad or told he was mad. But the higher the position of a spy the more he would have been despised by his employers, and the more thoroughly they would have him in their power. The plans in question

were those of Nice, which at that moment were being revised in the General Staff offices.

Finally were read out reports of verbal communications from a secret agent called X——, who was apparently no other than the Spanish Military Attaché :—

March, 1894 : "I infer from my last conversation with Schwarzkoppen and Panizzardi that they have an officer in the General Staff who informs them admirably."

April, 1894 : "You have one or several wolves in your sheep-fold."

June, 1894 : "An officer, who is, or was in March, in the second bureau of the General Staff is giving information to Schwarzkoppen and Panizzardi."

Mercier had finished with the secret *dossier*. Now, in the same dry, measured monotone, he went on to the arrest of Dreyfus, the danger of war with Germany which led him to communicate the secret documents secretly to the Court-Martial, to Dreyfus's alleged confessions, to the examination of the *bordereau*. He insisted especially that this document must have been written, not in April, as was contended in 1894, but in August. Its final expression—"I am just

starting for manœuvres"—would seem at first sight inapplicable to Dreyfus, who did not go to the grand manœuvres of September in that year. But he thought he was going, urged the General, until the last moment. A rule was made that year that the officers going through a course in the General Staff should not go to the manœuvres, but at the date of the *bordereau* Dreyfus did not yet know of this.

I am free to own that most of General Mercier's remarks came into my brain through a drowsy mist. I did certainly shake myself when I heard the soothing monotone pass from French into English; when Mercier appeared to be saying, "I can't go on all day listening to this sort of stuff," I knew I must be dreaming and woke up. On the stroke of twelve I was distinctly aware that he had turned round in his chair and was facing Dreyfus. "If I had the least doubt of his guilt," said the icy tones, "I should be the first to come to Captain Dreyfus"—it floated into my mind that this was almost too cruel even for bloodless Mercier—"and to say to him I was honestly mistaken——"

God, what was that? What is it? A yell, fierce and poignant, the bursting of furious passion tight pent up! It ripped the calm to pieces, and you half expected the hall to split asunder. Dreyfus was up on his feet, his body bent double, checked in mid-spring by the officer's gentle hand on his arm, his fist pommelling the air, his head and livid face craned forward at Mercier, his teeth bared as thirsty for blood. He looked as if he would have leaped upon him like a panther, but for the touch on his arm. And the voice! "You should say that" were the words—but the voice! None of us who heard it will ever describe it—or forget it. Men heard it that night in their sleep. It was half shriek, half sob, half despair, half snatching hope, half a fire of consuming rage, and half an anguished scream for pity. Before us all Dreyfus tore his very heart out. He was no corpse. Henceforth all knew what he was and what he had endured—was still enduring. In six words he told us all the story of the man from Devil's Island.

A shiver, half excitement, half pain, raced through every soul in the hall—except one—

the Grand Inquisitor's. The echoes died away, and we heard the monotone, unwarmed, unhastened, "I should be the first to repair my error"—"It is your duty," roared Dreyfus, in that same heart-splitting voice. The monotone went on—"but I say in all conscience that my conviction of his guilt is as firm and unshakeable as ever."

God, what a m—. No; not a man.

VI.

A SHOT IN THE STREET.

MERCIER was the spirit of darkness; but there was also a spirit of light. Nearest to the audience of the four robed figures on the Counsels' Bench was a young man of great stature and size. As he sat loosely on his chair, hitched his gown up on to his shoulders, leaned forward to listen, or heaved himself back to loll, every motion had a vast sweep and embodied easy power. When he stood he was a clear head above most men in court. His blue eyes looked out from under bushy brows—clear, big, honest eyes like a dog's. A light brown beard, neither very trim nor shapeless, and light brown hair just beginning to roll over his brow, tempered strength with a look of bluff kindliness. If Mercier was an Inquisitor, this sunny-faced giant was a Viking.

It was Labori, the great cross-examiner. Since he defended Zola he had given himself heart and soul to the cause of Dreyfus. Perhaps his skill in eliciting reluctant truths was piqued at the persistence of a mystery unfathomed; certainly his fighting spirit was roused by contumely to unsparing hostility. When first he had risen on the Saturday to cross-examine, his voice was agreeable, yet seemed too soft, too liquid for the man. But the moment he approached a point, a distinction, an admission, it hardened and rang like steel. In anger, you knew, he could roar out of that great chest like a bull. If any champion could plunge into the black Hades, choke lies and errors and ignorance, and probe out the truth, it was surely Labori.

Saturday had ended with storm in the air. Dreyfus's cry had filled all with electricity. At the last moment Casimir-Perier demanded to be confronted with Mercier on Monday. On that came a storm of hoots and hisses from the more violent journalists as Mercier left the court. On that a savage altercation between an officer and a Drey-

fusard on the very steps of the Lycée, a tumult of *Vive l'armée* as Mercier passed down the street, and three boys groaning *A bas les Juifs*, with five hundred sympathisers looking on. And on Monday Labori was to cross-examine Mercier! Curiosity was aflare.

Monday morning broke cloudy with a welcome promise of rain. I reached the court punctually at a minute to half-past six and was going in. A stamping behind me, a heavy rush past—and our esteemed President of the Press tore through the line, scattered the soldiers of the guard like a bolting horse, leaped into the hall, bounded on to a table. "Doctor, come quick," he roared, "to a wounded man. It is Labori."

Half a dozen of us are out in the street again running for our lives. I hear panting exclamations all about me. "Labori!" "Two revolver shots!" Alone in the middle of the street pounds a fat little man, his fists up to his chest, and talks all to himself: "Assassin, assassin, assassin!" he exclaims. A couple of mounted gendarmes

break through the hurrying crowd at a sharp trot.

There is a blackening knot on the canal-bank near a little bridge. On the fringe is the head of the Sureté Publique—a kind of detective political police—who enjoys, as his calling demands, the faculty of being everywhere at the same time. A group of journalists are eagerly questioning a grey old peasant, shovel on shoulder; he saw the deed, and now trembles to find himself required by the law. I saw a young Jew in tears. But most pressed to the centre of the knot, where a woman in a black-and-white summer gown was supporting something on her knee.

There lay the splendid Labori like a broken tower. One instant had wrecked the deep-chested Viking lawyer; lying wounded he looked no longer hugely powerful, but only bulky. A mattress was beside him, but he lay on the gravel footpath. His clothes were grimed as yellow with dust as if he had worked in it for a long day. There was little blood, if any, which seemed ominous of inward bleeding, which usually means lungs

and death. He lay on his side with one arm round his wife and his head on her lap, she stroking his hair the while. From time to time he rolled the wide dog's eyes upward and said a few words, faint but quite composed.

The assailant was gone out of the town, they said, and across country. The wounded man was about to be taken back to his house on a stretcher. There was nothing more to do but go back to the trial. But it was just adjourning after hearing of the crime, and in a moment the gravel court of the Lycée was black and red and gold with officers and journalists and public, all talking fiercely. Next minute all were rushing back into the hall; an eminent novelist was about to assault the editor of a leading newspaper. But gendarmes interposed and straightway disarmed everybody of every walking-stick and umbrella in the place.

I saw half a dozen bearded men on the edge of tears. As often as anybody came in from outside there was a rush: one moment the square was all twos and threes, the next it was empty but for one big black

swarm. The first news said that Labori was spitting blood. But presently came the rumour that it was little or nothing. The ball, presumably backed only with a few grains of bad powder, had apparently lodged in the muscle of the back. If that was so, it was only a matter of days before we saw him in court again.

So now back into court for our sensational morning. The President enters amid the usual clatter of arms, and says a few appropriate words. It is surprising how the very appearance of the little old colonel with the big white moustache makes for calm. This is only the third day we have seen him; but we have never seen him other than cool and impartial, full of dignity, tact, and good temper, courteous at all times, and firm when he must. The session is resumed.

And then, alas! we find that we have lost our best man. Me. Labori is a fighter, and his cross-examination of General Mercier would have been in any case a great duel, possibly have thrown light on the case. In his absence the devil seems to have gone out of everybody. Me.

Demange's cross-examination is damaging, may be, but it is always heavy. His method is to make a short—sometimes not a short—speech explaining what he is going to ask, and then to ask it. Meanwhile the witness is making up his answering speech; and while he is delivering it, Maître Demange is making up his next speech—and so on for ever and ever.

The famous confrontation of Mercier and Casimir-Perier goes off just as tamely. This is a famous device of French law, to hear two witnesses contradictorily, as they call it. Apparently the idea is that a man who told a lie when another man was sitting behind him will tell the truth when he is standing beside him. So the ex-President and the ex-Minister of War stand up and make alternate short speeches. You can only see their backs—the General tall and erect in his black tunic and crimson trousers, with his curious narrow cropped head; M. Casimir-Perier short, but equally erect, in a frock-coat and shepherd's-plaid, with his head curiously broad and flat at the top. They look like two schoolboys competing for a prize. You surmise that the

civilian will get it; his intonation is clear and his declamation rhythmical, while the soldier preserves his passionless monotone. But, as a matter of fact, each denies what the other says and admits nothing.

But what is the result of it all? You suddenly wake up to the fact that it has nothing whatever to do with the case. Whether Dreyfus communicated to a foreign Power documents concerning the national defence has suddenly become a side issue. The question has become quite different. In January, 1894, did Mercier treat Casimir-Perier cavalierly, and was Casimir-Perier right to resign? They cease even to pretend to know anything about Dreyfus, and are fighting each in the interests of his own self-satisfaction. And President and counsel and spectators all seem to think it the most natural procedure in the world.

Then come more witnesses, and you observe with amazement that not a single word that any of them says can be called evidence. They come in—take the oath, sit down if they are not feeling very strong, and then

interminable speech, each on

the subject of himself—what he did, what he thinks, what he heard tell, what he heard somebody say he heard somebody else tell. They go on till they stop; then somebody asks a question, and they begin all over again —like alarm clocks when you think they have run down and rashly touch them.

Here is an example of French methods of evidence. The officer who was with Dreyfus on the day of his degradation, Captain Lebrun-Renault, has asserted that the condemned man made a confession. A confession, of course, is evidence everywhere, but everybody knows that false confessions of crime are not rare; therefore, in English law even a confession requires confirmation. In this case the confession is disputed.

It is not pretended that anybody else now alive heard Dreyfus. Yet almost every witness up to now had discussed this alleged confession. First the President questioned Dreyfus himself on it. Dreyfus denied it. Next M. Casimir-Perier deposed that Captain Lebrun-Renault had said nothing about the matter to him. Next General Mercier deposed that he told Captain Lebrun-

Renault to tell M. Casimir-Perier about it. Next these two witnesses were heard in contradiction. The ex-Minister of War said that General Gonse heard him tell the Captain to tell the President; the ex-President said that M. Dupuy had told him that Captain Lebrun-Renault did not tell him, Dupuy, that he told him, Casimir-Perier. M. Cavaignac went into the same incident at great length. He said that General Gonse wrote to him that Captain Lebrun-Renault told him, Gonse, that he, Lebrun-Renault, heard Dreyfus confess. This jungle of pronouns is what the French seem to call evidence. And when you have struggled through it you hear that Captain Lebrun-Renault is to be called himself to give his own evidence in Dreyfus's presence and to be cross-examined upon it! What a trial!

The witness of whom most was expected on this Monday was M. Cavaignac. Unlike Mercier, Cavaignac was at least open and above-board. He is the good boy of French politics—a toy Brutus who has lived on his reputation for integrity ever since at school

he refused to take his prize from the son of the Emperor who imprisoned his father. This profession of honest man leads to high eminence in the Chamber of Deputies—the more so in that Cavaignac has almost a monopoly of it. He is the housemaid who sweeps up all the scandals of France. When every public man but half-a-dozen had dirtied his fingers in Panama, Cavaignac was the man to restore public confidence in public honesty. When Billot had succeeded Mercier, and the Dreyfus case had become worse tangled than ever, and the General Staff and the War Office were suspect—who but Cavaignac could go to the Ministry of War and vouch for them? To the outsider he is a tiresome prig, with his eternal protestations of Roman virtue; and he looks it, with his narrow, stooping chest, his narrow, pedant's head, his little moustache, and the close-cropped short side-whiskers on his cheek bones. But to France it is an obvious god-send to have one of her public men who can be relied upon to tell the truth. Cavaignac duly went to the Ministry of War and announced that Dreyfus was

guilty. Cavaignac said so: France was reassured at once. Presently Cavaignac got up in the Chamber and read a letter from one military attaché to another proving that Dreyfus was a traitor: France had it posted up on the walls of every commune in the country. And then—one day it was known that the letter was a forgery and that its author, the chief stand-by of the General Staff in its fight against Dreyfus, was in prison with his throat cut. And the mystery was that Cavaignac still said Dreyfus was guilty. The discovery of Henry's forgery, whereof he himself extorted confession and instantly acknowledged it, was the strongest confirmation of his famous integrity. But this time France doubted. His heart remained unimpeachable: only what about his head?

Now came Cavaignac into court at Rennes to set all doubt to rest. He stood up before the Council of War, stretched forth the hand and harangued it as if it had been the Chamber of Deputies. Frankly and clearly he told them everything. He told everything—and he told nothing. Not one single

revelation to satisfy the world of Dreyfus's guilt—only an argument such as any man who knew a little of the French army could have made quite as well. It was a good argument—clear, cogent, everything except convincing—and to the impartial mind it disposed for ever of the superstition that a man could not honestly believe Dreyfus guilty. Cavaignac proved that Dreyfus was in an exceptionally good position to know all the secrets detailed in the intercepted covering-letter. Very few officers in the French army are able to betray the information that was betrayed; none were more able than Dreyfus. To be evidence to hang a man and worse, this demonstration, to Anglo-Saxon ideas, should have gone further, and shown that none other was able to betray these secrets at all. It established Cavaignac's good faith and makes it easy to believe in other men's; it explained, maybe, why Dreyfus was accused. But it did not explain why he was, or ever should be, convicted.

The whole day was a procession of ex-Ministers—mostly generals. The first of the series was General Billot, a globular general

with a very white head and moustache, and an expression bearing something of the benevolent ferocity of a plump and elderly bulldog. He suggested the harmless terrors of a general in a comic opera. He seemed to be saying, "The army's going to the devil, sir; pass the port!" What he really did was to give an extended history of the Dreyfus case and his own views of it. Next came a rosy, brisk, really soldierly soldier—General Zurlinden. He was remarkable in that he stood up to give evidence, and in answer to a question he responded simply, "No"—the first monosyllabic answer of the trial. Then a very elderly, white-bearded general—Chanoine—who looked like a Non-conformist Member of Parliament appearing in uniform at a Covent Garden ball; nobody knows what, if anything, he said. Then M. Hanotaux, who gave a brief lecture on the duty of a Foreign Minister.

The only person who appeared to bear the Dreyfus case in mind was Dreyfus. From time to time he made protestations in a thick and colourless voice—always protestations of innocence. After that one moment's

explosion, the upheaval of a continent of passion, he had ribbed himself in his reserve again. He was again the automaton that could speak but one word—innocent, innocent, innocent!

VII.

Roget.

The day on which Me. Labori was shot was an eventful one for me. At the close of the sitting I saw my first genuine, unmistakable manifestant.

The evidence was just over, and the quays along both sides of the river were sprinkled with the usual motley of gendarmes, journalists, newspaper boys, and generals, with here and there a citizen of Rennes. All of a sudden I heard, quite distinct and quite close, the words, "*A bas la calotte!*" It means "Down with the tonsure!"—that is to say, with the priests. I whipped round and beheld a young working man in mustard-coloured clothes, listening, with modest self-satisfaction, to the echoes of his own exclamation. Others had heard, too, for when he moved slowly up the street he was followed by about five hundred people.

For a time he went quietly, and I feared that the active manifestation was over for the day. But suddenly a steam tram came snorting and shrieking along the opposite quay. When he saw it the manifestant became another man. His eyes blazed, his face squeezed itself all into the middle; he turned his head towards the tram, and, in a voice choked with fury, screamed three times, "*A bas la calotte!*" Then he looked back with the same modest pride, and, behold, five gendarmes were trotting slowly up to clear the street! At that he dived down a byway, and the day's manifestation was over.

O, yes, we shall have new dangers to talk over when we leave the good town of Rennes! Assassins? Why, bless you, every other man you meet is one—at least, the other side generally call him one, by word of mouth or in print, directly or by implication; and the other side ought to know. Rennes held many an anxious heart on Assumption Day, which followed Monday's sitting. The assailant of Me. Labori had not been caught, which meant, of course,

that he had friends and sympathisers, for otherwise he must have gone somewhere for food. The theft of Me. Labori's letters as he lay on the ground looked like a plot. In default of the real criminal somebody at every street corner was calling somebody on the other side an assassin. As you know, it is the favourite word of France. When we returned from court that morning Jewish ladies were waiting at the doors of the hotel to make sure that no assassin had assassinated their husbands. They told each other with shaking lips that the lower quarters, inflamed by cider—far weaker than lager beer—were contemplating a massacre of Jews; it was felt that there were too many of them, and that they gave themselves airs. They remembered, with palpitations, that it was less than a week to the St. Bartholomew.

An eminent novelist went up to an eminent anti-Semite and remarked, "Assassin! Your face displeases me. Assassin! I give you five minutes to leave this hotel. Assassin!" The anti-Semite, who happens to be a Jew himself, went to the Prefect and

asked for protection. "Perfectly," replied the high-minded official; "it is my duty to protect every law-abiding citizen, irrespective of party, race, sex, or creed. I shall do my duty. But," added M. le Préfet, "it would be wrong for me to disguise from you that my authority stops at the door of your hotel." Then, "By the way," he went on pleasantly, "when do you count to leave Rennes?" "To-morrow." "Then let me advise you, as a man of well known law-abiding tendencies, considering the emotion aroused by the odious attempt at assassination of this morning, to—to—advance the day of your departure by a day." And he did. The novelist, a much bigger man, accompanied him to the door, shouting "Assassin!" on to the top of his head; and Rennes saw that defender of the honour of the army no more.

But August 15th was Assumption Day, and Assumption Day cleared the air. It was, of course, a holiday; and when next morning we went again to the familiar hall of the Lycée, Rennes was its dear, old, sleepy self again. When we went in, it had not as yet got up; when we came out it was

enjoying its siesta; by the time its siesta was well over it was its dinner-time, and then its bed-time.

No excitement was expected in court, and it turned out rather less than was expected. It was in the true Rennais spirit that the proceedings opened with a motion for adjournment. The idea was to go on with a series of forty-eight hour adjournments until Me. Labori could be in court again. But the Court said No, and, though the Dreyfusards raged, the Court was doubtless right. Certainly Me. Labori's absence did cripple the defence, for Me. Demagne as a cross-examiner is more ponderous than ponderosity. Still there was, so far, no evidence, in an English sense, to cross-examine. On the other hand, it was plainly to the public interest—what with plots in Paris and arrests and anti-Semites fortifying themselves with revolvers and 2000 bottles of St. Galmier water—to bring these explosive days to an end.

Towards this end we made, on the 16th, some advance, but not much. The first witness was an ex-Minister of Justice,

M. Guérin. He was apparently called on the principle that any French statesman of Cabinet rank—which I reckon to be about seventy-five per cent. of them—is entitled, along with his pension, to come into court and give his views on the Dreyfus case, or on any other subject, preferably himself. Next came M. André Lebon, ex-Minister of the Colonies, whom they call the torturer of Dreyfus. He was a well set-up, capable-looking man, with long, drooping, yellow whiskers, and you would call him very unlike torturing anybody. He had much to say of projects for rescuing Dreyfus, which may or may not have existed outside the Gallic imagination, and he admitted that he had ordered Dreyfus in irons while they improved his palisade. He had been a brute, no doubt, vicariously; yet he left a clean impression behind him.

By way of pendant to Lebon they read out the official report about Dreyfus on Devil's Island. It was formal and colourless, and I think it was the most pathetic document I ever heard. Up to September, 1896, when there was a false alarm of a rescue,

Dreyfus was treated with comparative mildness. After that he was put in irons for forty-four nights, while a double palisade was built about his cell, which he never left; it was so high that he could not look over it at the sea. On June 6th, 1897, an English brig appeared off the Island and was fired on with blank. At the first sound Dreyfus started up, but immediately sank down again and lay quite still. His self-control saved his life, for the gaoler had orders to shoot him if he tried to escape. After that they moved him to another hut, also completely isolated by a high palisade. It was divided by an iron grill into two halves: in one was a warder who never took his eyes off Dreyfus day or night. He was forbidden to speak to his warder except when asking for something.

Truly heartrending is the dry record of what Dreyfus said. On July 2nd, 1895, when he had been on the Island nearly four months, he was asked how he was.

"I am well for the moment," he replied. "It is my heart that is sick. Nothing"—and here he broke down and wept for a quarter of an hour. On August 15th, 1895,

he said, "Colonel Du Paty de Clam promised me, before I left France, to make inquiries into the matter; I should not have thought that they could take so long. I hope that they will soon come to a head." They did not come to a head for over four years more; and it was no fault of Colonel Du Paty's that they did ever. On August 31st he wept on receiving no letter from his family, and said, "For ten months now I have been suffering horrors." Two days later he was taken with a sudden burst of sobbing, and said, "It cannot last long; my heart will end by breaking." He always wept when he received his letters. A year later he said, "I can only think with excessive pain in the head, and I cannot read my wife's letters a second time." Most of the days he spent sitting in the shade with a book in his hands; sometimes he was heard to sob, and often seen to hide his tears. He begged very earnestly to be allowed a medicine case, "For," said he, "I am an expiatory victim, and I claim the right to put an end to it at my own moment. Sometimes my head bursts, my heart splits, and I fear madness."

Altogether he wrote over a thousand letters in his four years—to his wife, his brother, his son, the President, the Ministers, General de Boisdeffre — anybody. His correspondence and that of his family was so affecting that the commandant forbade the warders to read it, lest they should relax the rigour of their guard over him.

Next, amid emotion—which means that many stood on the forms and the rest on the tables, and all sh-h-h-ed for silence till the room was like a serpent-house—came Mme. Veuve Henry. But emotion was wasted. Dressed in deep black, neither tall nor short, neither beautiful nor ugly, Mme. Henry was neither an avenging fury nor a forgiving angel. The only distinguished feature of her evidence was a curious trick of beating time with her thumb. For the rest it had to do with the late Colonel Henry and his wife, as M. Guérin's evidence had to do with M. Guérin and M. Lebon's with M. Lebon; but on the question whether Dreyfus had delivered the documents enumerated in the *bordereau* it had no bearing whatever.

That was the one question which as yet no evidence had directly touched. And, what is more, no evidence seemed likely to touch it.

General Roget, the next witness, was an excellent example of the methods of the prosecution. He gave the impression of very much higher ability than the colleagues who had preceded him. Though he is only three years above fifty, his hair is grey-white and his forehead bare. Short, but broadly built, and of elastic carriage, the combination of a large, sloping brow, of a white moustache with the waxed ends turned towards his ears, and of shoulders held back from a slightly protuberant stomach gives the impression that he is always leaning backwards, even when he stands most upright. It gives him something of the bearing of an opera singer, and he has a ready instinct for an elegant pose. His voice is pleasant—"a pretty tribune voice," as the local paper put it: "he rolls agreeably the *r*'s." His carriage is jaunty, his smile ready, his features good, his complexion clear. He ought to produce an attractive, soldierly effect—only somehow

he does not. The features are good individually, but they do not make a good face. Perhaps it is the backward-pointed moustache that seems to lend him a perpetual sneer; perhaps the carriage is a little artificially genial; somehow the ears seem unpleasantly prominent and pointed. General Roget has the air of a white Mephistopheles.

He had not been directly concerned with the Dreyfus case in its early stages, having made a study of it only at the time of the Zola trial. On the strength of this study he was appointed Chief of the War Minister's Cabinet on July 8th, 1898, and held that office under M. Cavaignac and General Zurlinden. Therefore he was not in any way tied to defend acts of his own; at the same time he owed his promotion to his activity in the case and might expect to gain more. In both ways he was likely to be the strongest advocate the prosecution would bring forward.

He ran quickly up the platform steps and began. He had delivered an exhaustive review of the case to the Cour de Cassation; but you could recognise the advocate in that,

instead of repeating it as the others did, he began with the question of the hour. He set himself to destroy the confessions of Esterhazy—no difficult matter, seeing that they mutually destroy each other. "Every version is false," he concluded, "and yet I should not be the least surprised to see him come to this bar before the end of the trial and propound another." He then threw off a short passage to discredit Judge Bertulus, who would be the next witness and would favour the defence. He touched slightly, supplementing Mercier, on the secret *dossier*.

He enlarged on the possibility that Dreyfus could have got the plans of Nice. Next, he insisted especially on the suspicious denials of Dreyfus in 1894 and at his interrogatory on the first day. Dreyfus, urged Roget, neither explained nor discussed. He denied knowledge of the plans of concentration, though he had drawn maps from memory at the General Staff showing particulars for each army. He denied having seen the firing manual, although Colonel Jeannel was ready to swear he had lent him one, and he could have admitted this with perfect safety.

And certainly this has been a strong point against Dreyfus. He has denied so much and so mechanically that it is hard to acquit him of lying. He may have thought he was in a trap, and the less he admitted the better chance to get out of it. But how many intelligent men, while perfectly honest, would be so short-sighted?

General Roget had finished his first glass of water, and poured out another. Presently, by way of corollary, he pulled out his handkerchief and began to mop his forehead and neck. He was evidently exerting himself greatly to talk, to remember, to explain. Now he attacked the *bordereau*, beginning with the note on the hydraulic brake of the 120-millimetre gun. This could not mean the old glycerine brake of 1883, which everybody knew; it must be the new hydro-pneumatic brake, which first enabled a gun of this calibre to be used as a field-piece. This was so little known that it was generally, though incorrectly, spoken of as "hydraulic" even by officers of artillery. It was made at Bourges and was being tried between 1888 and 1891—a period which

included the time when Dreyfus was stationed there. Very few officers knew the details of it; but it is certain, said General Roget, that Dreyfus, by conversation with them and by picking up what was going on in the foundry, could have got information which gunners would have refused to an infantry officer like Esterhazy. And he added a story showing that in July, 1894, Dreyfus once talked with such knowledge and intelligence at dinner of what was being done at Bourges that General de Boisdeffre took him apart after dinner and walked with him up and down a bridge over the Mosel for an hour.

Touching lightly on the other points, he came finally to the firing-manual and carefully analysed the paragraph of the *bordereau* that deals with it. "This document is extremely difficult to get, and I can only have it a very few days"—it was the easiest of the five for Esterhazy to get. He could have borrowed it from a dozen artillery officers, whereas there is no evidence of his having done so; while the other documents he could have got only from the General Staff, and that on the hydro-pneumatic brake not even

thence. On the other hand, Dreyfus could get the manual, but only one of three copies for use among several officers, any one of whom might ask for it at any moment. "The Minister has sent a definite number for distribution among the corps"—anybody but an artillery officer would have said "the artillery corps" or "regiments." "If therefore you wish to take from it what interests you..."—the process here indicated takes time. Esterhazy would not know he could have the manual till he got it, which would involve all the process of writing, awaiting an answer, sending the manual, copying it, sending it back. It was impossible for Esterhazy to have done this between August 5th and 9th, when he was attending field-firing at Châlons; Dreyfus for his part would await Schwarzkoppen's reply before he got the manual at all.

Thus strand by strand he laboured to unwind the meshes from Esterhazy; knot by knot he toiled to tighten them round Dreyfus. He drank more and more water, the sweat broke out more and more profusely. Roget was working with terrible

earnestness—working to destroy a life as good men work to save one. Mercier, whom the prisoner's exculpation would ruin for ever, showed cruelty but no bitterness; Roget, on whom it would bring no shame, sweated hate at every pore. He argued carefully, closely, pitilessly; but he did more than argue. His words said much, his voice, his manner said far more. He accused him of a dozen treacheries; he implied a thousand.

Listening hour by hour, day by day, to testimony such as this finished by quite numbing the judgment. With every fresh witness the cold mist of doubt settled thicker and thicker over the whole affair. I came to Rennes firmly believing Dreyfus innocent; now I no longer knew what I believed. Hour by hour, day by day, the hope of certainty receded further into the shades. It was all a baffling mystery, and a mystery it seemed likely to remain till the day of judgment. Listening to men like Mercier and Cavaignac, it was difficult to believe they were not honest—at any rate, at the beginning. Listening to men like Roget—though he spoiled his case by his violence—

it was idle to deny that there were strong presumptions against the accused. So there were against Esterhazy—as strong perhaps, but not a whit stronger.

The sense of mystery became an oppression. What was it? What did it all mean? Witnesses talked by the hour, and when they had done all that remained was a floating suspicion that there was something—something below that they had left unsaid. Here was the great case which for five years had convulsed France and perplexed the world. In its ultimate effects it will probably alter the face of Europe. Some have called it the beginning of the end of civilisation. And there seemed to be nothing certain in it. Everybody had promised the whole truth for this final clearing of the muddle. And then nothing came, nothing was known, and still it was impossible to believe that there was nothing to know. Everything seemed possible. Every wild hypothesis in turn hardened from possibility to probability. One hour there had been a great plot and a ring of traitors. Dreyfus was in it and had been sacrificed to save the others. The

next, ambitious Dreyfus had really, as he is said to have acknowledged, given up trumpery documents in the hope, Jew-like, of making a personal success by bringing to the Intelligence Department some great secret of Germany. Presently Esterhazy was telling the truth; he had written the letter to Schwarzkoppen, which never went, so as to implicate Dreyfus, innocent or guilty. Anon Dreyfus, having been shunned and tabooed by his brother officers, had rushed to his revenge in treason. Any supposition was admissible—and half of them, even if admitted, brought us no nearer a clear knowledge of Dreyfus's guilt or innocence. Even though military attachés and ambassadors came and lifted their hands to the Christ and swore, France would never trust their testimony on such a question. The case of Dreyfus seemed hidden from human knowledge—a secret to be unwrapped only before the Great White Throne.

In the meantime only one thing was clear, and grew clearer every day: innocent or guilty, traitor or victim, Dreyfus was a man.

The first day so stiff and jerky, like a

galvanised corpse, now he moved in and out of the court more elastically, and his gestures when speaking were neither clumsy nor theatrical. The first day his voice was cavernous; now, though still harsh and a little snarling, it was full of volume and strength. The second day General Mercier baited him out of his self-control; now he sat all day rigid and intent, and heard man after man call him traitor without a challenge. The long waves of accusation came lapping over him, impossible to deny, yet more impossible to disprove. Labori was gone, and Demange inactive; yet Dreyfus endured.

I believe he was the only Frenchman in court—he to whom it meant new life or hell again—who followed the evidence with a just appreciation of its value. When they asked what he had to say to M. Lebon, he replied, "I am here to defend my honour and my children's. I shall not speak again of what happened on Devil's Island." He listened to the awful narrative of his torments—the more awful for the precise coldness of the official language—damp-eyed but unflinching.

Finally came General Roget, raking him for two hours and a-half with insult and insinuation. Taking his hint from Mercier's apostrophe and the outburst that followed, Roget turned and spat the last part of his accusation full into Dreyfus's face. He faced towards Dreyfus, pointed at him, underlined each damning innuendo. A turn of the screw—another—a pause—gently, very gently, another—a slackening of the screw—ah ! a sharp wrench.

Dreyfus never swerved. At the end, when his turn came, he rose, and from the fury vibrating in his voice you could tell how hard he had been holding the blood still in his heart. But what he said was exactly what every Anglo-Saxon in the court had been thinking all day long. "All these days," he cried, "I have been listening to speeches for the prosecution. I cannot defend myself." And then, as always—"innocent."

He was still the dead man half alive, but at least he was becoming used to his semi-life and commanded himself. Yet these days of unanswered accusation were

an ordeal and Dreyfus himself was unearthly. At times he seemed to be petrifying back to living death again. In every look at the hall, in every photograph, though the place was full of fine heads, the grey-white clay-white Dreyfus was the only thing you saw. The harsh profile with the strong forehead and nose, with the black bar of moustache cutting it like the empty grin of a Death's-head, the long, gaunt jaw and forward-thrusting chin, the naked cranium, half bald, half cropped—it all looked grotesquely like an illustration in a phrenologist's shop window. Or, again, if you saw his whole body, the thick shape pressed closely into the chair, the knees close together and the feet together bending backwards, reminded you of an ancient Egyptian statue. That, and the smooth, Oriental skull, the stern, moveless, Oriental mask—he might just have come to life after sitting entombed through centuries in stone before a temple of Thebes or Nineveh. A mummied mage of Chaldæa, the forgotten god of a lost people—anything but a living man of the year of Our Lord 1899.

VIII.

PICQUART.

THE Court had just undergone a severe course of a gentleman named Bertulus. He is a *juge d'instruction*, who has accidentally, in the course of his functions in Paris, got himself enmeshed in the Dreyfus case. A brisk, good-looking little man, with bright black eyes and an enormous black moustache, he went up to the bar and began to wave his arms wildly in all directions. You would have said he was an opera-singer practising before a pier-glass—only not a single word came. However, the President appeared to be looking at him intently, and presently the prosecuting Commissary was struck by a doubt. Inquiry hardened suspicion into certainty: M. Bertulus had been giving evidence for some time, and nobody but the President and the two nearest judges knew it. He was asked to begin again, and did so; he also continued at great length.

At the end he was confronted with Mme. Henry—solely that the lady, with outstretched thumb, might call him Judas. It is not a woman speaking, she said: it is the voice of Colonel Henry. It was exactly like a scene out of an Italian opera.

After that depressing experience, composedly slouching up to the bar in an ill-fitting morning coat, came Picquart. To the Dreyfusard Picquart is the hero of the piece; to seven French officers he is a very suspicious character. "His enemies," said a journalist from Paris to me—"even his enemies have never dared impute any other motive to him than love of truth and justice." Two minutes later I heard one of his enemies declare that he took up the innocence of Dreyfus solely to ruin Du Paty de Clam, with whom, for reasons utterly unprintable, he was at bitter enmity. To the Court, at any rate, Picquart is the man who has set his face like a flint against his superior officers, and spent months in prison for trying to prove them either knaves or fools.

Until he ran his head upon the Dreyfus case three years ago Picquart was almost

the most promising soldier in France. An Alsatian from Strasburg, he had seen service in Tunis and Tongking; he was major at thirty-two and lieutenant-colonel at forty. He had spent most of his home service at the École de Guerre or on the General Staff. He knows English, German, Austrian, Italian, and Spanish—an accomplishment almost supernatural in a Frenchman. He had enjoyed the high esteem of his chiefs; there was nothing in the French army to which he might not reasonably aspire. But now he came before the Court after spending ten out of the last thirteen months in a secret prison. Neither as the enemy of generals nor as the successful staff officer was he likely to be popular with seven regimental officers: younger than any member of the Council, he was actually senior in the service to all but two.

His demeanour was not at all conciliatory. He approached with absolute calm on a face that bears no sign of passion either for good or evil: he looks—and looks as if he knows he looks—the embodiment of pure reason. He settled himself very carefully

and lengthily on the witness's chair, got his shoulder-blades comfortably into the back, crossed his leg over his knee, and pulled down his trousers over his boots. Then he poured out a glass of water and laid both hands firmly on the table before him. He suggested that, while far from wishing to swagger, he knew he was master of the situation. When he began to speak there was neither the ease of conversation nor the rhythm of declamation. You remembered that he had been a professor at the École de Guerre. It was a lecture, pure and simple; and the first word was as distinct and clear cut as the last. His whole demeanour said, "Now, gentlemen, I must ask you to listen to me. I shall take some time; but, if you will only listen, you have now the chance of your lives to understand the Dreyfus case."

And then, without hesitation or confusion, Colonel Picquart explained the Dreyfus case for seven hours and a half. It was a masterpiece of reasoning—the intellectual triumph of the trial. I should strongly advise the French War Office to make its peace with

Colonel Picquart, for he has a better head than all the generals put together. He went over the whole ground, from the secret documents to the latest fancies of Esterhazy, and seemed the only man who knew every foot of it. He knew the offices of the General Staff like his pocket—where every document was kept, where everybody worked, what everybody's work was, what he was in a position to know and what he was not. He had seen every stage of the Dreyfus case, and could recite from memory almost every cryptogram of the secret *dossier*. Yet, with his innumerable digressions and parentheses, though he threw out hints for the elucidation of puzzle after puzzle on the spur of the moment, he never entangled himself in details. Always he returned to the main argument at the point where he left it. He touched every point and brought it into its due relation with his whole theory. He saw the nature and bearing of every fact by the dry, white light of pure reason. This was a man in some sort like Mercier—a man for whom hate or love, anger or hope or fear, could never

colour what seemed right. Only this was a man with a brain—a brain like a swift, well-oiled machine, every wheel running easily in its place, every nut and bolt doing its due share of work, no more and no less. To the nodding stranger Picquart was a revelation; here at last, you cried, is a man with a clear head. It was a speech for the defence, of course—not evidence; but it was the speech of a supremely gifted intelligence. The whole Dreyfus case was unreeled like a proposition of Euclid.

And not only the Dreyfus case, either. Always, you will have observed, we had been trying two cases; by now they were four. The Dreyfus case led in the Esterhazy case; and now in turn the Esterhazy case led in the Picquart case. Esterhazy was accused to prove Dreyfus innocent; Picquart was accused in turn to prove Esterhazy innocent again and Dreyfus again guilty; finally Henry was accused to prove Picquart honest, Esterhazy doubly guilty, and Dreyfus trebly wronged. General Roget had initiated us the day before into these first two branching alleys of the trial. Bertulus had

followed him and had introduced the fourth element—the Henry case.

Picquart began with Dreyfus. He described the flutter caused by the arrival of the *bordereau*, the investigation, the identification, Du Paty de Clam's dictation scene, the trial, the alleged confession—all from the point of view of an eye-witness. For himself, he had thought the handwriting of the *bordereau* akin to Dreyfus's, but could not say it was the same. He had seen the lines that Dreyfus had written at Du Paty's dictation, and to his eye they showed no tremulousness. Going on to the *bordereau*, he argued that there was no proof that the information it invoiced was of any importance. If it had been, then the author would have said so, to enhance his price. If Dreyfus knew of the Madagascar plan of campaign, then he knew more than Picquart, who was then his chief. As for the firing-manual, it was not a confidential document, and almost anybody could have got it. It may be answered, by the way, to this that Dreyfus, being on the General Staff, would have no need to cry up his wares—they were bound to be precious. But Picquart here,

none the less, put his unerring finger on the weak spot of the general's case. They all assumed that the information betrayed was of the first importance. What evidence was there for that assumption? None in the *bordereau*. Except that it was necessary to implicate Dreyfus, there was no reason for it in the world.

That finished August 17th. Next day Picquart—still in the same absolutely lucid, absolutely dispassionate, absolutely reasonable style—plunged into the secret *dossier*. He had known it when he was head of the Intelligence Department, nearly three years ago; now he had to deal with it from memory. In the Dreyfus *dossier* of his time, he said, there were three documents of primary importance. The first was the document "Doubt proof," of which the text has been given already. Picquart's interpretation was of course diametrically opposed to Mercier's. As he read it, Schwarzkoppen said, "I doubt; the proof (of my correspondent's genuineness) is his officer's brevet. It is dangerous for me to deal with a French officer, and I cannot personally conduct negotiations. He brings

what he has." Here in the original German is *absolute ge—*, then a blank, and then, in French, *bureau de renseignements.* About half the words in the German language begin with *ge—*. Du Paty made it *Gewalt* and translated "I fear the absolute power of the Intelligence Department." Picquart made it *Gewissheit*, and translated "It is absolutely certain he is in relations with the Intelligence Department." Then he went on, "His information has no relation with regimental matters, and is important only as coming from the Ministry." Which meant, summarily, that the telegram did not refer to Dreyfus, but to Esterhazy in conjunction with Henry.

Next he boarded the Davignon letter; Picquart concluded that its terms are so unconstrained that "your friend" can hardly apply to a spy. Would Panizzardi simply say, "Take care Davignon does not know," if it were such a deadly matter as treason on the General Staff? Third came the "*canaille de D——*" letter about the plans of Nice. But if Dreyfus betrayed these plans, said Picquart, where did he get them from? In two offices where plans are kept

search was made and nothing had been lost. It was possible, urged the prosecution, that there may have been such plans in the 1st Bureau of the General Staff. Possible; but were there, asked Picquart, as a matter of fact any plans missed from that Bureau? There is no record of any such thing. After the Dreyfus trial, he concluded, it became the habit of the General Staff and Intelligence Department to put down any treason that came out to Dreyfus, evidence or not. Dreyfus accounted for everything, and any swindler who wanted a couple of hundred francs brought in a new betrayal by Dreyfus. Whereas when, after Dreyfus's condemnation, a document found its way out of the 1st Bureau, and Picquart had to inquire into the leakage, he was merely told that it had passed through so many hands it was impossible to say. So little did anybody care for treason into which it was impossible to drag Dreyfus.

Here Picquart left the Dreyfus case and proceeded down the branching alley to Esterhazy, and himself, and Henry, and Du Paty de Clam. He went on in the same

calm, luminous style, and you would never have known, from any change in voice or manner, when he was speaking of his enemies or when of himself. It was plain enough, going by the substance of what he said, that Du Paty was his personal foe, that he hated him. But it was a curious contrast that whereas, the day before, General Roget had perspired with his virulence against a man he had hardly seen; this cool and balanced intelligence delivered his damning charges against the enemy of his life in exactly the same way as he would have delivered a lecture on the formation of infantry for the attack.

It is not necessary to follow him into the details of what happened after he became head of the Intelligence Department. The grounds of his charges against Esterhazy have been related in Chapter I.; so have the stories of the veiled lady and the forged telegrams sent to Tunis. Picquart's part in all this branch of the case was double; on the defensive he had to clear himself from the charge of having used unjustifiable machinations to prove the guilt of Esterhazy; on the

offensive he strove to establish a conspiracy between Esterhazy, Henry, Major Lauth of the Intelligence Department, and General Gonse, to discredit his discoveries and himself.

He denied utterly that he began to shadow Esterhazy before his suspicions were awakened by the express letter-card (*petit bleu*) from the German Embassy, or even heard of him till then. He put in a very smart counter-attack. There was, he said, in a collection of documents got together against him a newspaper cutting mentioning Esterhazy. Henry had dated this January 5th, 1896—before the arrival of the letter-card; but when it came to be verified, behold the true date was January 5th, 1897. "You notice the fraud," was all the quiet Picquart said: Henry had made another forgery with a view to show that Picquart had had Esterhazy in his eye as a victim before he began to gather evidence against him. As for the charge of forging the letter-card, it was simple to rebut it. At the time when he received a forged telegram in Tunis—"They know that George is the author of the letter-

card. Blanche"—it mysteriously came about that the name of Esterhazy in the address of this card was scratched out and the same name, Esterhazy, written above the scratching. The suggestion was, of course, that Picquart had altered the name to implicate Esterhazy — only, unluckily, Esterhazy's address was left intact, the card had been photographed without any scratches when it first arrived, and the scratching had been done so clumsily that experts had detected the original "Esterhazy" under the forged one.

In attacking, Picquart had plenty of weapons to his hand. Gonse had tried to persuade him to hush up the case against Esterhazy for fear of re-opening the Dreyfus case. So in his blunt and not unkindly way had Henry. "When I was in the Zouaves," parabled that burly ranker, "a private, the son of a colonel, committed a theft. His captain wished to prosecute, the higher officers did not. The captain was broke, and the thief remained." Against Du Paty he asserted —what Esterhazy admitted also—that the veiled lady was Du Paty himself in a false

beard and blue goggles. Against Lauth he had the presumption that he doctored the letter-card. Against Lauth, Henry, and Esterhazy together he produced, following Judge Bertulus, a very black story. There was a German secret agent called Richard Cuers, who told a French secret agent, one Lajoux, that he wished to work for the French Intelligence Department. Picquart sent Lauth and a commissary named Thoms to interview him at Basle, and at the last moment Henry, who spoke no German, induced Picquart to let him go too. They came back and reported that it was impossible to get Cuers to say a word. Later Cuers met Lajoux, and said, "What do they mean by sending this red-faced man who bullied me and would not let me speak?" He had said also to Lajoux—and presumably repeated it to Henry and Lauth—that Dreyfus had betrayed nothing to Germany; but that, on the other hand, a decorated major, between forty and fifty, had sold documents on artillery, but had been dismissed because his information was worthless and palpably wrong. Thus Picquart discounted the evidence that Ester-

hazy knew nothing about artillery. Finally, and here was the blackest part, when Bertulus searched Esterhazy's lodgings a letter was found marked "Basle R.C.," which letter when Henry saw in the judge's room, he collapsed with every sign of guilty consternation. Esterhazy, argued Picquart, was that decorated major who betrayed incorrect information on artillery, and Henry was his accomplice.

Thus, with a thousand other points too long for mention, Picquart straightened out and wove together again the whole tangle of the case. Always with the same pellucid intonation, with the same grasp and logic, with the same air of candour and moderation. Everything he said was without rancour, without prejudice—a sincere opinion open to argument. A few of his minor points were inaccurate, and the correction of some was uncontradicted by him all through the trial. But a man who pleaded for his life as if it were an interesting mathematical theorem—it wanted either more bias or more knowledge than I commanded to call that man a liar.

He came down glowing with a sort of

placid triumph in the clearness of his own head. The case, which day by day had been growing blacker and blacker against Dreyfus, was on a level again. And Dreyfus, who had been growing whiter and whiter, was once more a living man.

IX.

THE ALSATIANS.

AFTER Picquart the interest of the case fell down badly, and showed no signs of getting up again. On the 19th we had the anti-Dreyfusard anti-Picquart, in Major Cuignet, an officer with a big, fair moustache, pale, thin cheeks, vast ears, and the general air of an intelligent artisan. He had been commissioned by M. Cavaignac to classify the Dreyfus papers, and in so doing had discovered Henry's forgery. This was his title to fame, but to-day he cut that subject altogether. Cuignet had been put up—it was just like the unjudicial judicature of the Dreyfus case—to answer Picquart, much as in the House of Commons you might put up a Harcourt after a Chamberlain. For the rest, he said nothing new and left a nasty flavour in everybody's mouth. He seemed a little

parasite that spent his time on the Staff running errands for the generals and would say exactly what the generals would like him to say.

Next came General de Boisdeffre, a very different figure—the gentleman of the trial. He was tall, and perhaps a little old for his sixty years, his head was both grey and bald, his moustache and tuft of beard grey too, his features well cut, fine, distinguished. His voice was somewhat gusty, as if age were attacking him there also, yet distinct, and had a mellow pleasantness after the sharp, hard ring of most of the witnesses. He spoke with politeness of his opponents, with warm affection of his friends, and of himself—who guaranteed the Henry forgery and then resigned—with a rather sad dignity. After him came his late second in command on the General Staff—General Gonse, a tubby, short-legged double of Napoleon III. He was less attractive. He was on his own defence all the time instead of on the attack of Dreyfus, and pulled at his Napoleonic beard nervously. Both De Boisdeffre and Gonse have much to answer for, if Drey-

fusards tell truth. The impression on my mind was that whenever anybody brought General de Boisdeffre a troublesome point about the Dreyfus case, he used to say very politely and kindly, "I think you had better see General Gonse about it." That was probably weak; but I am much deceived if De Boisdeffre is not an honourable, as he is a courtly gentleman. But it was hard to see why either he or Gonse was there except that no Dreyfus trial would be complete without them.

Monday also gave us little enough in the way of Dreyfus case, but there were some interesting personages. General Fabre and Colonel d'Aboville were the first, but they were out of place; they really heralded the cloud of witnesses that were to come on the following days to depose on Dreyfus's demeanour in the offices of the General Staff. After them—for no apparent reason except that it would be a pity to leave a picturesque figure out of the Dreyfus case—came M. Cochefert, Chef de la Sureté, the great detective of contemporary France. Nobody in the world can ever have looked less like a detective; he is the sort of man

who would have sat down with a criminal in a café and had confidences forced upon him before the second absinthe. He wears a frock-coat down to his heels, as if he had had a section cut out of his legs. His face is a blend of Bismarck and a fat mastiff; as he sits in the café with a tall hat on the back of his head and his jolly paunch between his knees, you would put him down as a thrifty cabman from Auvergne who has saved money and now has a growler or two of his own. With regard to the Dreyfus case, he was present at Du Paty's dictation scene and the arrest; at the moment of the arrest he was convinced, as is the duty of a good French detective, of the prisoner's guilt. But the prosecution took little out of Cochefert, after all; for he wound up that if he had then known the *bordereau* and the handwriting of Esterhazy, he would have felt it his duty as an honest man to go to the Minister and call his attention to the similarity between them.

The next witness was Gribelin, the archivist of the Intelligence Department. You must understand that when Picquart was

head of that service his subordinates were Henry, Major Lauth, Captain Junck, and Gribelin; and all were against him on the Dreyfus-Esterhazy question. To-day the three last were to appear, so that of the Picquart, if not of the Dreyfus, case it was an important crisis. Gribelin was a man of middle size with the air of a promoted sergeant, which I suppose is what he is. As he gave his evidence he rubbed his thumb and forefinger continually across his throat—thinking, perhaps, of his mentor, the late Colonel Henry. A man of his class being employed to lock up secret documents in boxes would be quite sure to become saturated with secret-service all through, and so Gribelin was. He was more diplomatic than the diplomatists. A military attaché said something: that was quite enough to convince the astute Gribelin of the opposite. Dreyfus said he was innocent; that proved to Gribelin that he was guilty.

After Gribelin came Lauth and Junck—men of a very different stamp. They were by far the best witnesses the prosecution had yet had—the best witnesses anybody could

wish to have. Fully half of the military witnesses seen hitherto had been poorly made men—podgy, herring-gutted, slouching; both Lauth and Junck were models of soldiers. Lauth was the dragoon—black tunic with white collar and cuffs, baggy red trousers; he moved with the elastic swing of a horseman; stood while he gave evidence with legs crossed, leaning easily forward towards the judges; to look at his limber back you would have said that he was twenty instead of forty-one. In face he was tanned, with a brown moustache and a heavy jaw and chin; with his monocle you might have taken him for an English guardsman. Junck was bigger and beautifully built—straight as a cleaning rod and long as a lance. He wore a huge moustache framed in a square face that bespoke sense and resolution.

Their manner of giving evidence was altogether admirable. Both these Alsatians, knowing German as completely as French, had been in the Intelligence Department and understood every detail of its work. Neither dissipated himself on a review of the whole case. Lauth spoke on the production of the

bordereau, Junck on his intercourse with Dreyfus, whose contemporary he was; both on what passed in the Intelligence Department under Picquart. Lauth was perhaps the more spirited of the two, but Junck's slow, clear, unimpassioned style was equalled only by Picquart's.

Both were quite distinct and quite positive. Both knew what they were talking about, and showed what they knew with a wealth of corroborative detail. They told how the furniture was placed, where Picquart sat, where they stood: after that how could you disbelieve them when they went on to tell you what each said? They were so quaintly humorous that you could not suspect them of malice. They were so frank in giving points to the other side that you would not suspect them of bias. The general effect of their evidence was that you could not believe a word that Picquart said.

It was the most curious problem in life, and the most baffling. Here were the three Alsatians—Picquart, Lauth, and Junck, all equally positive, all equally lucid, all equally convincing—and either the first or the other

two must be deliberately and elaborately lying. Only which? Of course the Anti-Dreyfusards said Picquart, and the Dreyfusards said Lauth and Junck. But for the man who merely wanted to find out the truth it was blankly hopeless. True, there were two of Lauth and Junck against one of Picquart; on the other hand, it would probably pay twice as well to be on Lauth's and Junck's side as it would to be on Picquart's. If Picquart or Junck be false—and one or other must be—what do you think of men who face their fellows on the most important issue of France's recent history, and in plain, temperate, carefully selected language, without a hesitation, a slip, a discrepancy, a second of confusion, lie steadily for hours? If Lauth be false, what of a man—it constantly happened in the subsequent days—who at every turn of the case, at every crisis, when Labori was flashing his searchlight, when the witness was silent and the judges were suspicious, and the generals lost their heads—who flung up his hand with "I ask to be heard," and, standing up on the platform, told, in simple, unaffected language, the

right lie in the right place. You could never put him down, you could never take him wrong. Cool, ready, resolute, if Major Lauth was lying he is the master liar of the world; and if he is not, Picquart is.*

Well, I suppose we shall all see through the Dreyfus case on the Day of Judgment; meanwhile I, for one, give it up. But I ask you to give your attention for a moment to the extraordinary prominence of Alsatians in this trial that involves France. Dreyfus has less achieved his greatness than had it thrust upon him; yet Dreyfus is certainly a man capable beyond the average of France. Dreyfus, Picquart, Lauth, and Junck were the clearest-headed men in the place—all Alsatians. Freystaetter—whom you will meet later—the fighting soldier, the only quite disinterested man in the place—is an

* Only at the end, I must regretfully add, Lauth ruined his whole artistic display. He alleged that on the day of the Czar's great fête in Paris Picquart brought his mistress to lunch with the wives of his subordinates. He added information which enabled most people in court to identify the lady. This ungentlemanly burst of spite annihilated all his days of self-restraint. I am not sure but Junck was the best liar after all.

Alsatian. Zurlinden, the most soldierly of the generals, Bertin-Mourot, the most soldierly of the witnesses, Hartmann the best technical artillerist — all Alsatians. Colonel Sandherr, whose secret agent brought in the *bordereau*, and M. Sheurer-Kestner, whose action led to its first public attribution to Esterhazy—both Alsatians. General Mercier, who headed the prosecution, and Mathieu Dreyfus, who engineered the defence—both were brought up in Alsace.

I wonder what will happen to France next generation when there are no more Alsatians left? They will all be Germans then, and whatever will the poor Frenchmen do? They will have to close the Intelligence Department of the War Office, for one certainty; for an Alsatian seems the only Frenchman capable of knowing German He seems, also, the only man in France who can keep a cool head and stick to a point. What will she do when that backbone of Teutonic stability is withdrawn? As they say in the newspapers—poor France!

X.

THE COURT AND THE CASE.

YOU will say I am trying to shirk the historian's duty, but my first duty, as they said daily before the Court-Martial, is to tell the truth. The truth is that at this stage the Dreyfus case, the world-shaking, heart-tearing Dreyfus case, was becoming a bore.

Most fair-minded observers had given up all hope of arriving at the complete and certain truth. The enormous range and complexity of the case—a range of five years and a complexity involving perpetual contradictions between men who both ought to know, perpetual appeals to witnesses who did not, and apparently did not propose to, appear, rival interpretations of cryptograms in German cipher, the text of which we never saw, and the unceasing doubt that any given document might turn out at any moment to be a forgery—had melted all our brains to

jelly. I take the case of the Schneider—dare I call it forgery?—letter. General Mercier quoted in his evidence a letter from Colonel Schneider, the Austrian Military Attaché in Paris. In it the writer said he still believed—this was dated November 30th, 1897—that Dreyfus had had relations with the German secret espionage offices at Strasburg and Brussels. To the English mind Colonel Schneider's belief seemed to have little enough to do with the case; but General Roget said he considered it the most damning document in the whole secret *dossier*. Almost at the same moment arrived a telegram from Colonel Schneider, who was staying at Ems, denouncing the letter as a forgery. The Austro-Hungarian Chargé d'Affaires in Paris confirmed the disclaimer. Major Cuignet, in his evidence, threw doubt on the denial, On the top of that came a letter from Schneider, saying that the date attributed to the letter must be false, for in November, 1897, he took the diametrically opposite view of Dreyfus's guilt; but the text itself he must examine before he could say whether it was from his hand or not.

Later on there rose up a rumour that Mercier, at the last moment, was going to produce a photograph of the original *bordereau*—of which the document before the Court was but a copy, made either by Esterhazy or somebody else. This photograph, they said, had been made while the original was coming back from Berlin to Paris—for lo! it was annotated in the German Emperor's own hand, and bore the superscripture, "Return to Captain Dreyfus for further details!" What could you make of a case when the documents—the indubitable black and white documents—were such fleeting wraiths as these?

The Frenchman and the foreign partisans had no such symptoms: to them everything on their side was crushing, everything on the other flimsy. "Every day," said the *Intransigeant*, "fresh proofs are remorselessly piled up against the traitor." "Every day," said the *Aurore*, "demonstrates more fully the deplorable weakness of the enemies of truth and justice." I met one Frenchman—and only one—impartial enough to admit that he was partial.

Said he: "Suppose you had discovered that there was treachery in your Navy, which is your all, as our Army is ours. And suppose that for five years you saw your admirals maintaining one side of the question and your little Englanders the other. Which side would you be on?" I had only one reply; if I were a Frenchman I should have been an anti-Dreyfusard. In England I should trust the admirals. But what should I do when, after I had trusted the admirals five years, the admirals came forward to give me the materials to form my own judgment, and gave me the same sort of materials as the French generals were giving in the Dreyfus case? If the evidence had been given at once, I should have said that it looked bad, perhaps, but was not enough to hang a dog on. But after five years of bitter faction? It is not so easy to resume the judicial mind in a day. I declare it is an outrage to ask a Frenchman to be impartial.

For the members of the Court-Martial the test was as cruel a one as any man could undergo. If you took seven Frenchmen from

the street they would have made up their minds before they so much as saw the prisoner; Dreyfus would have been condemned, on a fair average, by five to two or six to one. But these seven officers, in addition to the prejudgment of years, found superior officer after superior officer—the men whom it is their military duty to trust and follow—coming before them and pleading all on one side. Whatever they decided, they were sure to be the butts of the bitterest hostility for the remainder of their lives. Even though the evidence were abundant, irrefutable, and all on one side, their position would have been difficult enough. It was turning out scanty, doubtful, and ambiguous. The result was that whatever decision they gave would be ascribed, not to an honest estimate of the weight of the evidence, but to motives of which professional interest or political prejudice were the least discreditable. I take it that every one of the seven would sooner have faced a park of German artillery at a thousand yards than sat on the Dreyfus Court-Martial.

Considering this, when I read in English papers that the Court was showing signs of partiality, my blood boiled. If it had been true, it had been better left unsaid at the moment. At this stage certainly it was not true. Drumont, of course, had not lost the chance of an indecent exhibition—only he imputed unfairness on the opposite side. "On the first day," said one of the writers of the *Libre Parole*, "Colonel Jouaust showed tact and impartiality;" which meant that he severely cross-examined Dreyfus. But now he had repented of his good intentions. "Why did he brutally threaten to clear the court when somebody shouted 'hoo' at Dreyfus?" If this sort of thing goes on, the *Libre Parole* reminded him, one will recall the fact that Colonel Jouaust's wife is a relation of Waldeck-Rousseau—that that agent of the Panama swindlers was actually a witness at his marriage, and that his brother is a militant Freemason!

As a matter of fact, the Court-Martial commanded the respect of everybody, Dreyfusard or anti-, who saw it at work. The

colonel I have spoken of before; he gave the idea of being a firm but kindly father to everybody in the room. He sat there with keen eyes twinkling behind his eyeglasses and his huge white moustache hovering over the council table like a dove. On his right was Lieutenant-Colonel Brogniart, Director of the School of Artillery at Rennes, a narrow-headed, high-browed face, expressive of a precise intelligence; his technical accomplishment was, of course, beyond suspicion. On the President's left was a mild and elderly major, with benevolent spectacles and white, fluffy hair like a baby's. To right and left of these, like the supporters of a coat-of-arms, were a small major and a big, black, bullet-headed captain on each side. All belonged either to the Engineers or to the Artillery, which means that all had passed through the École Polytechnique, and were therefore men of education.

The members who took the most active part were the Colonel, the Lieutenant-Colonel, and Captain Beauvais. They questioned every important witness, and never made a single unintelligent or inap-

posite inquiry. It was no small matter even to know the questions in this case, much less answer them; but these three, at least, knew the questions thoroughly. Captain Beauvais's examinations would have done credit to a lawyer. He was a burly man with a round, cropped head and round, staring eyes, but he followed every turn and double of the case like a bloodhound. He knew what every witness was driving at, he knew what every witness was in a position to tell, and out of that he knew exactly what he wished to hear.

So did Colonel Jouaust. The inquiry had strayed the very second day far beyond the original limits imposed by the Cour de Cassation. But the Colonel made a resolute effort to keep it straight. Thereby he involved himself in charges of partiality from both sides: every French witness thinks it is grossly unfair if he is not allowed to say anything he likes about anything. The President often came into collision with Labori later in the trial, partly because Labori wished to range at large over all the controversies of the last five years, partly

because Jouaust had never been brought in contact with such a whirlwind of a cross-examiner before, was a little afraid of what he would do next, and tried on principle to prevent him from doing it. The insaner Dreyfusards, who were the majority, objected that he treated the Generals with deference; but how otherwise on earth would you expect a colonel to treat a general? The Anti-Dreyfusards, on the other hand, were furious with him for shutting down the Commissary of the Government when that estimable functionary wanted to make speeches; but I do not think their fury was very sincere after the first week or two of the case. On the whole, Colonel Jouaust, thrown by the caprice of a roster into the middle of the cauldron that was seething his whole country, behaved with impartiality, tact, and dignity, and won the respect of everybody who watched him. Towards the finish I fancy he was very eager to have the beastly thing finished and get away with the relation of Waldeck-Rousseau into the country. With this aim he tried his utmost to confine the issue to the interlaced Dreyfus

and Esterhazy cases, and leave the Picquart, Henry, and Du Paty de Clam cases to settle themselves. It was not easy to keep them out, but at length it began to be done. Only at the very end, as we shall see, did he make an unquestionable blunder, which damns him for ever in the eyes of Dreyfusard Europe; but for my part I watched him and still believe in his honesty.

Now to sum up the position on the morning of August 22nd. The whole case had been outlined—or rather the whole five intertwining cases. Henceforth we should be able to concentrate more particularly on the Dreyfus-Esterhazy case proper. That case, as it came before the Court, you might divide into five parts. There was the evidence of the secret *dossier*, the technical analysis of the *bordereau*, the character of Dreyfus, the handwriting, and the alleged confessions. Of all this we had had the first two branches fairly well threshed out by Mercier, Cavaignac, and Roget on the one side, and Picquart on the other. The defence would have some witnesses bearing on them to come at the end of the trial. We were now about to

enter successively on parts three, four, and five. As yet it looked anybody's case. Dreyfus's guilt had not been proved, but neither had his innocence. That, of course, ought not to have needed proving; he had a right to the benefit of the doubt, but would he get it?

XI.

Labori.

It was twenty-five minutes past six of a chilly morning. The hall of the Lycée buzzed and clacked with even more than its usual horse-power of conversation. Yesterday we were all talking of the Dreyfus case's sudden swoop into an abyss of murky dulness; to-day everybody was galvanic with anticipation. Yesterday we had floated into a sleepy pool of unimportant witnesses, and the only ripple on the monotomy was the gradual rehumanisation of Dreyfus. To-day the witnesses were smaller yet—a string of unimportant colonels and majors—yet everybody was looking keenly forward to be thrilled. The explanation lay in one name —Labori. Labori was well and would appear to-day.

Even in the full gallop of French conversation eyes perpetually shifted towards the door. And suddenly, in a second, every-

body knew that he was there. There moved in the great figure in the white-edged black gown, with the little black advocate's bonnet clinging dandily to the side of his head like a soldier's, with the big, eager face and the shock of unruly brown hair.

He came in alert and eager, conscious, like all orators, of the effect he made, frankly delighting in it—a spirit half electricity and half sunshine. Officers and sightseers and journalists alike leaped up and shook the roof with clapping. He moved towards his place breast-deep in hand-shakes. General Mercier got up from his seat, walked over and shook his hand. Awhile the two stood bowing, smiling, talking easily — the two champions in the mortal fight for a man's life and the dominion of France—each accuser and each accused—each well knowing that the victory he is striving after is the utter downfall of the other. But for those unaffected minutes Labori and Mercier were nothing but two honest men and gentlemen. France has lost much that was great during these years of faction, but there still remains French courtesy.

"*Presentez r-r-rmes!*" The rifles clatter; the Court enters, salutes, takes its seat. Then the President—he, too, a model of suave and sincere courtesy—expresses the sympathy of the judges, congratulates the lawyer on his escape. He rises to reply.

"Do not tire yourself," says the colonel; but you might as well try to stop the earth in its orbit as the natural orator when his feelings are aflow. He rises, his huge figure just a little bent, his colour the flush of fever rather than of health, his voice retaining the warmth and music of its old tones, but without the fire and ringing steel—and out it pours. The words rush out in a stream, yet, despite the softness of the utterance, their articulation is such that from the back of the hall you hear almost every one. He speaks of the cruelty of the blow that struck him down at the moment of realising his two years' dream, of pleading this case in all its amplitude before a military tribunal—of his sorrow then and his joy to-day; he thanks first the Court and then everybody, known and unknown, friend and foe, who have ex-

pressed sympathy with him; gives all to know that he has come back to fight and win; and concludes melodiously that the part of error in human affairs is always greater than the part of bad faith.

In an Englishman it would have disgusted; in a common Frenchman it would have moved a kindly smile; in Labori it touched and stirred and thrilled. Here, at last, was an orator. Whether he meant it all or not —and for my part I make no doubt he did— mattered nothing to the oratory; the rest of us, whatever we felt, could not have seemed to feel it as he. A true orator—an actor with brains. His gestures, instead of following his words as a clumsy speaker's do, moved with them on the same impulse, spontaneous, unconscious, the outward index of the spirit. His voice hung always on the rim between wrath and tears. It swayed and swung, paused and hastened, glided over this, hurled itself on that, till it became an automatic commentary on his words and played on the hearts of men as a master plays on an organ. It was not a man saying words; it was thought, feeling, and purpose, coming out into

words by themselves, and coming out in perfect harmony with each other. It was not a speech, but the revelation of a soul.

The witnesses came in and began to tell their uninteresting stories. But before the second had stood down the air was suddenly quivering with combat. Labori was fighting; and in a twinkle the whole aspect of the case was changed. For twelve days the generals had been ponderously attacking; an hour of Labori and they were suddenly on their defence. As the witness enters and begins his tale the advocate is lying rather than sitting in the armchair they have given him, one of the lowest heads in court, instead of the highest as he had been the first day; his whole aspect spells lassitude. The witness goes on: he slowly sits up, and crouches his head close over the table, like a lion watching its prey. The witness finishes; slowly, slowly the great form upheaves itself, bent nearly double over the table. His turn to question is just coming; he raises himself erect and towers. And then he springs. His voice is gentle, reasonable,

persuasive, but he swoops on the vital part.

It was Major Rollin, the present head of the Intelligence Department, that he swooped on first. Did Major Rollin translate the Schneider forgery? No. That question should be gone into with closed doors, says the Commissary of the Government, and like a flash comes Labori's parry. It was General Mercier, not he, who introduced Colonel Schneider's name and letter; then, none contradicting him, he goes on his way. Can Major Rollin tell him whom he is to question about the translation? No. Then what is the worth of documents which we cannot see, which we may not discuss, for which it is impossible to know who is responsible?

A second to feel the blow, but not to recover from it, and then, gently, persuasively, how did General Mercier come by his copy of this document? General Mercier will not reply.

"Mr. President, I insist!" says Labori.

The generals gasp; here, suddenly, is a man who insists. "I allow myself to insist"

—the gentle voice is rising—"that questions put very respectfully and with great prudence shall be answered. We want complete light. I insist"—the voice is swelling to a roar—"I insist upon General Mercier answering, for I have a right to an answer."

Stupefaction! No help from the Court; no prompting from friends: General Mercier takes the responsibility.

"It is his own personal responsibility;" then, swiftly, mercilessly: "I ask by what right General Mercier has in his possession all the secret documents?"

No answer.

"I insist."

"But as General Mercier will not answer," says the President——

"But the law!" thunders Labori. "There is a law on espionage! When this document came into the bureau General Mercier was no longer Minister. It is a crime!"

Five minutes of time—a score of sentences sharp as rapiers, crushing as sledge-hammers—and the Dreyfus case is turned clean round. Five minutes ago Mercier was the accuser. Now he sits silent—the accused—accused

under that very law on espionage which he was pressing against Dreyfus. The advocate has made no change in the evidence. But he has put the other side in the wrong.

Henceforth there is only one man in the room, but he fills it—the man who insists. The spectators watch him and hold their breath when he rises to speak. The Court sit and listen to his smashing blows in silence, as if he were an uncontrollable force of nature. The prosecutor sits paralysed. The generals lay their heads together. The witnesses give evidence with one eye on the Court and the other on the cross-examiner. The very gendarmes wake and follow the trial. The very soldiers of the guard outside bunch together, creep nearer, and peer into the hall at the man who insists.

The Dreyfus case is suddenly Labori. He has all the doggedness of Mercier, the subtlety of Roget, the clearness of Picquart, the passion of Dreyfus himself. All eyes to see the weak spot, lightning to strike, crystal to argue and confute, inflexible iron to compel —now luring Siren, now raging Berserker— Labori is the very incarnation of the all-

inquiring, all-constraining, relentless, resistless, remorseless might of law.

At the end of the day Dreyfus turned and shook his hand for the second time, and for the first time his stony face broke and melted into a smile.

XII.

HIS COMRADES UPON DREYFUS.

PRESENTLY, on this same day, we saw the advocate on his sunnier side. There came up to give evidence Lieutenant-Colonel Bertin-Mourot, a soldier all over and all through, breezy, simple-minded, kind-hearted, thick-headed, transparently honest. You may be sure that whoever goes on or whoever hangs back, his men will follow Colonel Bertin. He gave his evidence like a series of words of command — now pausing to remember, now checking to correct himself, now bursting into a gust of exclamation, now turning with a stentorian "No! No, no! O no, no!" on an advocate he suspected of tripping him up. It was thinking aloud in a voice of thunder.

He had been Dreyfus's chief in the Second Bureau of the General Staff, and spoke of his habits. When asked what were the

hours of his bureau he replied with feeling, "We were supposed to go to breakfast at half-past eleven, but how many's the time we've not left till twelve or half-past!" When he began a story telling how M. Sheurer-Kestner sent for him, he cried unaffectedly, "I suspected at once that it was the Dreyfus case coming up in the healthy regimental life I was leading." He told how he was walking at Belfort with one of the Scheurer-Kestners, and passed the factory of the Dreyfus family. "It is a peculiar factory—in the centre a big chimney, on the right nothing—a desert surrounded by walls. I turned and said, 'There's Tropman's field—there's the field of crime.' That shows I never doubted Dreyfus's guilt."

Here at least was no intriguer. Labori rose to cross-examine him, and there ensued the queerest, most irregular, most irrelevant, prettiest scene of comedy you ever ought not to have heard in a law court. "Does Colonel Bertin remember," asks Labori, "that I had the honour of dining with him at the house of a common friend a fortnight after Dreyfus's degradation?" "Name?" cries hearty Ber-

tin. Labori whispers. "Certainly." "Does Colonel Bertin remember telling me he considered himself one of the principal artisans of Dreyfus's condemnation?" "Artisan? No! Allow me! The word is important." Then he goes on to explain that he always had thought till the other day that he discovered Dreyfus's treason, but now his comrades assure him they discovered it while he was on leave. "At any rate, Colonel Bertin spoke of the affair with emotion." "Emotion! I should think so! One of my old officers condemned of high treason! I should think so." "Does not Colonel Bertin remember speaking very warmly about Maître Demange—not in any way that might wound him?" "When recalling a conversation it is important to bear in mind its atmosphere." "Surely." "Maître Labori will permit me to remind him that he was then, as he may be now for all I know, the man who came up to me, took both my hands and said, 'Never shall I forget what you did for my father.' And I honour myself to-day that I may perhaps have had something to do with the giving of that well-

earned cross to M. Labori, Chief Inspector of the Eastern Railway. I found myself at dinner with the son of this good M. Labori, who did so well in 1870; evidently I talked to him with pleasure. What I said I don't know. Will you go on with your story, Maître Labori? If I remember I will say to you 'Yes; quite true; I remember.'" "I hope," takes up Labori, full of good humour, "Colonel Bertin understands that I am not setting a trap for him. First, will he allow me to thank him from the bottom of my heart for what he has just said and what I was not expecting to hear?" "I am here to tell the truth," breaks in the jolly Colonel; "I have nothing to hide."

And so on. The conversation turned out to have nothing in it at all, merely that the Colonel had said that Demange was advocate of the German Embassy, and that Labori, seeing how easily a good soldier could believe a ridiculous fable, thereupon began to suspect the innocence of Dreyfus. There was nothing in the silly incident at all except sheer courtesy and mutual kindliness. Sheer waste of time, of course, only I do not think

anybody grudged it. The Dreyfus case is not so full of mutual kindliness as all that.

The remaining witnesses of August 22nd, and those of the 23rd and 24th, were—with one exception, treated later—neither lengthy nor important. The first was Lieutenant-Colonel Gendron, of the 1st Cuirassiers—a smart-looking officer who had done some service for the Intelligence Department. He told us how he had once been to see an Austro-Hungarian lady in Paris, who was neither young, nor beautiful, nor virtuous, but who knew a great deal about Austria and Hungary. So did Colonel Gendron, whereon she said he must be a spy. After he had gone away, the Colonel reflecting on these words, and on the luxury wherein, although neither young nor beautiful, she was able to live, came to the conclusion that she must be a spy herself. When Dreyfus was charged in 1894 with having been to this same lady's house, he replied that Colonel Gendron went there too, and so he supposed there was no harm in it. Thus Colonel Gendron came into the case, and all this he said in 1894. "But there is one thing," he added with

great solemnity, "which during four years I have just spent in Africa has dwelt with a veritable anguish in my spirit, and which my conscience tells me it is my duty to tell to-day." Whenever they gambit like this you can always be sure that something of sterling unimportance is coming; and so it did. The question that inspired his anguish was this: why did Dreyfus, not knowing him, give his name, of all others, as reference for the Austro-Hungarian lady? And he darkly added that at that time he had just quitted a most confidential post in the Intelligence Department. It was most suspicious—until Maître Demange pointed out that he had, as a matter of fact, asked himself that very question before the Court-Martial of 1894. "I thought I hadn't," was all the Colonel replied—and went off presumably to forget he had said it again, and suffer anguish of conscience four years more.

The rest of the day was a procession of Dreyfus's old comrades on the General Staff. Captain Besse next testified that Dreyfus once came into his room to bring a secret document up to date; it was agreed on all

sides that he had been ordered to do so by his commanding officer. Major Boullenger said Dreyfus knew a great deal about mobilisation, and once asked him a very significant question about changes in the points of detrainment for the cavalry divisions of the covering troops. Dreyfus said that the only question he asked was, "Any news in the Fourth Bureau?" Next came Lieutenant Colonel Jeannel, who had lent Dreyfus a firing-manual at a date he could not fix. On the whole he thought it was before July. Dreyfus replied to this deposition that he never borrowed the firing-manual at all, and that in 1894 the prosecution alleged that he had learned of it from conversations in February and March, whereas Jeannel never saw the manual till May. The last witness of the day was Major Maistre, who likewise dwelt on Dreyfus's knowledge and his insatiable curiosity.

Next day saw the procession of officers resumed. Major Roy said that Dreyfus could easily have got at the safes in the War Office where documents were kept. Major Dervieu said the same, and added that

Dreyfus boasted of being able to come late to the office in the morning, with the implication that he stayed alone after hours to make up his work. The prisoner retorted that he came late only on the Mondays between August 16th and September 24th, during which time his wife was away in the country and he spent Sundays with her. Then came Captain Duchatelet, who said that Dreyfus (*a*) once opened a bag of secret papers, and (*b*) once told him he had lost either 6,000 or 15,000 francs at the house of a courtesan. Dreyfus said that he opened the bag when on duty, which witness agreed, and energetically denied the story about play.

So far things had been dull enough. But now a faint curiosity flickered up, for the next witness was one of M. Quesnay de Beaurepaire's. This gentleman, you must know, is an ex-judge who had constituted himself a sort of private public-prosecutor of Dreyfus. He had published appeal after appeal imploring anybody who had any evidence of the traitor's treason to communicate with him at once. Many had, and a queer lot they were. One was a groom

who said he had held Dreyfus's horse while he followed the German manœuvres; one was a gentleman who said he had heard one German officer say to another in a café, "Well, Dreyfus will soon bring us news about that." Another was a gentleman who said that he had been in the Kaiser's bedroom and seen the words, "Captain Dreyfus is arrested," written on a newspaper. A fourth was a mysterious stranger giving the name of Karl, who dragged the ex-judge all over France to rendezvous which somehow never came off, got him to advance large sums for expenses, and finally wrote to him one morning—and to the *Figaro* also—returning the money and assuring M. Quesnay de Beaurepaire that he was an ass.

The present witness was a gentleman giving the name of Charles Louis du Breuil, landed proprietor. He wore a tight-buttoned black morning coat and light trousers, and looked perhaps less like a squire than a shop-walker. He bowed with suavity to the Court and began his story in the most approved novelistic style. "In 1885 and 1886 I lived in Paris, and it was my custom to ride every

morning in the Bois. One morning, a few feet before me, in an alley near the cascade, I saw a horse slip on the ground, which was this morning covered with snow—fall, and bring down his rider with him. I did what anybody else would have done in my place"—and so on. The fallen horseman bore the melodious name of Bodson, the owner of a shop in the Rue de Rivoli. The incident produced an acquaintance, and acquaintance—only after M. du Breuil had made inquiries and received what he called "favourable information" as to M. Bodson's character and social position—became friendship. He was introduced in due course to Madame Bodson, in whose company was Lieutenant Dreyfus. Soon after he dined with the Bodsons, and there again was Lieutenant Dreyfus—and also an attaché from the German Embassy, with whom Dreyfus appeared to be on most friendly terms. The patriotic Du Breuil's resolution was quickly made. Next morning he told Bodson, politely but firmly, that he would not go again to a house where he had met a German.

"Why, I'm delighted to hear it," cried Bodson. "They're not my friends, but my wife's; and, as you must have seen, Dreyfus is her lover." Then he added, "I could have him turned out of the army to-morrow."

"But if you turned out every officer of the French army who has taken to himself his neighbour's wife," responded the knowing Du Breuil, "you would make rather a gap in the Army List."

Bodson said he did not mean that, and proceeded, as *bourgeois* husbands always do in French plays, to dwell on the luxuries he allowed Madame Bodson, and her ingratitude for the same. A day or two afterwards Du Breuil asked Bodson whether it was because of the German attaché that he said that, but could get no direct answer.

"If I were you," thereon said the correct Du Breuil, "I should go straight to the Minister of War. I believe you to be a good Frenchman, and it is your duty."

"Easier said than done," replied the cautious Bodson. "I am in business; I have my shop."

"Whereupon," concluded Du Breuil, "I

left him and never saw him again. *Voilà, M. le Président, ma déposition.*"

It was almost a pity to put any further touches to a masterpiece like Du Breuil's; it was painting the lily. But next morning the defence suddenly produced from the back of the hall a gentleman named Linol, liquidator of companies. He explained that, happening to be in court the day before, there had suddenly fallen on his ears the name of Bodson. Now, he also knew Dreyfus and the Bodsons in 1885 and since; he was able to assert that the society they received, if a little mixed—said the fastidious Linol, who himself looked like a miller in Sunday clothes—was quite respectable. Furthermore, Dreyfus's sister-in-law visited the house; furthermore—and here is the point, said the perspicuous Linol — Bodson had assured him, after the condemnation of Dreyfus, that he did not believe the accused capable of treason.

The sentiments of Bodson being now thoroughly elucidated, the way was clear for another branch of the case. The contemporary evidence as to Dreyfus's past was

over and we could get on to Esterhazy. But before we go on two points had come out very clearly from the officers of the General Staff.

The first was a very noticeable strengthening of testimony since 1894—even since the appeal before the Cour de Cassation early this year. What was then an opinion had now become a conviction, and general statement had hardened into particular and definite accusation. Again and again Maître Demange, watchful if ponderous, called on the Registrar to check witnesses by reading their previous statements. Colonel d'Aboville in his deposition here said that the author of the *bordereau* must be a *stagiaire*, or officer attached for a two years' course to the General Staff as Dreyfus was; in 1894 he only said he must be an artillery officer and on the General Staff.

Major Boullenger in 1894 said that Dreyfus's questions were often indiscreet; here he particularised with the highly suspicious story of his inquiries about the cavalry of the covering troops. In 1894 Major Dervieu merely said in a general way that

Dreyfus came late to the office of mornings; in 1899 he said plumply that Dreyfus sometimes stayed absolutely alone in the office between half-past eleven and two and could ransack every document in the place. Of course, the Dreyfusards said that the order had gone out from the generals; evidence was ruling light and everybody was to make his contribution a little heavier. To my own mind the fact is just as well explained less discreditably: after five years of a subject a Frenchman can talk himself into an honest belief in anything. It is very possible also that the man who took no trouble with his evidence in 1894, when Dreyfus's guilt was taken on trust, could quite truthfully strengthen it when the importance and contentiousness of the case urged him to dig deep into his memory. In any case—conspiracy, honest delusion, or truth—the fact remained that the evidence against Dreyfus was being pressed as it had never been pressed before.

The second point is a personal one—the attitude of the prisoner. All through this series of witnesses he was seen at his best.

He sat unmoving while the witnesses deposed—the strange, harsh profile, grimly cut at the mouth by the dark moustache, more rigid, more immobile, more unearthly than ever. But at the close of each testimony he rose and discussed it—did not merely deny and protest, but discussed it, neither hysterical nor automatic. His memory of the incidents brought forward, whether true or false, was for the most part wonderfully clear-cut—how many times he must have threshed them over inside his palisade!—but when he did not clearly remember he said so without constraint. When there was a plain justification for his action he said so plainly, when there was a point which could be cleared up in his favour by an inquiry he demanded inquiry. There was no show of passion against his accuser. But for one theatrical outburst—"I love France and I love the army, the country. Read over what I wrote in the Devil's Island and you will see!"—he was throughout the embodiment of clear reason, logic, moderation.

His self-command was the more commendable in that for two days he had to

listen to the most unamiable accounts of himself, and they were so unanimous it was hard to doubt that they were true. We got the picture of the old Dreyfus, the prosperous Dreyfus, the unpurged Dreyfus as he was in 1894 and will never be again. The picture is an ugly one. None of his comrades liked him; most detested him. You will say the other officers disliked him because he was a Jew. He was very able and very ambitious—but his ability and his ambition appeared wholly selfish. He would shirk laborious inquiries and then go to more conscientious officers for the confidential results. He "exploited the situation," said Colonel Bertin.

He devoted, at the same time, great attention to subjects such as mobilization which might get him a better post in war-time than that to which he was assigned. He was perpetually thrusting himself into what did not concern him in hopes of getting something that might profit him. Like a true Oriental he was very low with the high and very high with the low. He could flatter his superiors, although that did not

prevent him from irritating them with his importunate and impertinent curiosity. Among his equals and inferiors he swaggered —"in a choking way" as one officer put it. He swaggered about his knowledge, his cleverness, his quickness in learning things, his late hours at the office, his money, his mistresses. Supple, clever, secretive, acquisitive, unboundedly conceited, cheaply arrogant—he seemed made to fit the anti-Semite imagination.

Of course none of this proves him a traitor. None of it excuses these cowardly soldiers who let an unpopular comrade's guilt go by default. But that he was unpopular who can deny?

XIII.

Esterhazy.

The principal witness on August 23rd was Charles Marie Ferdinand Walsin Esterhazy.

On the whole he is the most interesting and romantic character that had yet come before the Court. Dreyfus is more wonderful, no doubt, but Dreyfus's interest is almost an accident; it is what was done to him, not what he did, that makes him unique. Esterhazy owes his fascination to no freak of fate; he is the captain of his own soul, and is what he is in virtue of his own individuality.

Were he as commonplace as he is the opposite, he would still be interesting as the one person in the Dreyfus case who appears entirely on his own account. He favours neither side, but rails at both. Neither has a good word to say for him; both sides spew him out of their mouths.

Out of the cloud of irrelevancies, hearsay, and tittle-tattle that daily befogged us there

three campaigns in three different services. His life had been that of a *condottiere* of the Italian Middle Ages — and *condottiere* is exactly what he ought to have been. What is better, he knows it. "The Dreyfusite papers," said he in his deposition, "call me *Reiter*, *Lanzknecht*, *Condottiere*. It may be; I glory in it. With soldiers like me, men used to win battles, and such as I did not abandon their comrades in the melly." Esterhazy is the pure adventurer—a *condottiere* born four hundred years too late. He is as veritable a *sans-patrie* as any Jew of them all.

Fate had brought him into the French service, but he cursed it and hated the French. "The general," he wrote to a lady from Tunis, where he saw service some eighteen years ago, "is determined to play the fool; we never doubted it. In the first real war these great leaders will be ridiculously beaten, for they are both cowardly and ignorant; once more they will go to people German prisons, which will again be too small to hold them." "I should be perfectly happy," he wrote again, "if I were killed to-

morrow as a captain of Uhlans cutting down Frenchmen." And he goes on to gloat over the picture of "the sun red over Paris taken by assault and given over to be sacked by a hundred thousand drunken soldiers."

To Frenchmen such words were horrible, unspeakable. To Esterhazy, the Hungarian by descent, the Austrian by education, who had fought for Kaiser and Pope, as well as for Emperor and Republic, that he should next serve another Kaiser as Uhlan was the most natural idea in the world. It was the most natural idea in the world that the soldier-of-fortune should dream fondly of the sack of cities. From all his life emerges the same character of the free-lance. Even before the highest Court in France his language—"I will not repeat his military terms," as he says himself of Henry—is the language of the camp. So are his vices. He married a lady of good family and fortune—"my chiefs were consulted," he writes with a characteristic attempt at moral blackmail, "and represented me to her family as an officer with a future"—but he dissipated the fortune, and was not constant

to the lady. His connection with Mlle. Pays is to-day more than notorious. "You will admit," he writes, "that it is a queer army where one is obliged to give explanations of a thing like that." Though he never tires of calling himself a good officer and a good soldier, he was far from assiduous in his regimental duties. If he did not play he gambled on the Bourse. He was erratic, untrustworthy, continually turning on his dearest friends. His conversation was wild and almost always inapposite. When he was trying to get into the War Office he complained that Colonel Henry was keeping him out. When he was told a few hours later that Henry was working for him he cried, "Why, if Henry weren't nice to me it would be the end of everything." He seemed that strange, but not unknown, phenomenon—a man wholly without balance and wholly without conscience.

And yet the extraordinary thing about him was, that though he might leave his friends in the lurch, they never left him. He borrowed money and abused the lender if he asked for it again; but when he went

back for more he got it. He played a crooked part in 1892 regarding the anti-Semitic duels, in which the Marquis de Morès won fame; yet when he wanted to be recommended for a place his fascination was such that the very relations of those who had suffered from him were unable to say No. He squandered the goodwill of his own family and of his wife's, yet the indefinable charm of his personality always gave him plenty of interest when he wanted something done. His mistress, Mlle. Pays, remained devoted to him after he was ruined, imprisoned, broke. He was as gifted as he was winning. He spoke, says one who used to know him, every language in Europe.* He kept up with every discovery in every science, and was widely, if not profoundly, read in military and general history. He worked hard when he liked, and work came easy to him.

All this builds up no ordinary character. But thrown over all this is another attribute

* He does not, but you must remember that it is no common man in France that can speak any foreign language at all.

not easy to define. It is Esterhazy's extraordinary way of envisaging himself. He considered himself different from other men. He is always thinking, always talking of himself. He is one of those men who are always in the centre of the stage of their own minds with themselves for the applauding house; and whatever part Esterhazy saw fit to play he played it to the life.

To-day he is the struggling and heroic husband and father; yesterday he was the frail but sympathetic sinner: to-morrow he will say, "I am nothing, but I am very worthy of interest and pity," because of his ancestors and kinsmen who died for France, and because he is the last of his name. Next he is dignified: he must be worth something, because generals and deputies interest themselves on his behalf. Presently he is pathetic and furious with his friends—"Weil, the friend of my childhood, for whom I have twice all but taken sword in hand, whom I rescued, sweating fear, from my friend the Marquis de Morès; Curé, who dandled my children while he was getting up stories against me, and who has sought protection against me

from a general, like a baby of four from its nurse." All owed everything to him; all have deserted him.

When he was accused of treason by Picquart, and Du Paty de Clam gave him the liberating secret document to blackmail the General Staff with, he turned the screw on the generals and the very President with the cool, undaunted adroitness of a Sforza. When he came to tell the tale before the Cour de Cassation another part hit his fancy. He was only doing what his superiors wished: he was the sentry at the gate of Pompeii—all loyalty and discipline, and deserted.

Dodging a dun or holding up the President of the Republic, it was all one to Esterhazy: for he thought himself the equal, or rather the better, of everybody. From his theatrical habit of looking at himself he seems to have grown imbued with a sense of the superiority of his spirit and the magnificence of his destiny. He had all the attributes of a great man, except greatness. To hear him talk he might be a Napoleon at the very least. And because he had, after all, never made a figure in the world, he was for ever

railing at fortune. He was born a disappointed man. He aspired to everything, and what he got was nothing. Half genius and half madman, ruined by his own extravagances, a hereditary consumptive, without patriotism, without conscience, gifted and soured, he "had come to fear nothing, was ready to do anything."

But to come back to the Dreyfus case: did he write the *bordereau?* Well, he says so, and the best experts say so; so we may assume it as probable, if not certain, he did. But was he a traitor, or did he, as he says, write it to order, to condemn Dreyfus and shield others? Who knows? Sometimes he says he knows that Dreyfus gave up the documents, sometimes he says he did not. He used to deny he wrote the *bordereau*; now he says it was traced—God knows why—from an original which he has to this day in his pocket. He cannot understand why the witnesses at Rennes did not say what they, and he, knew; yet he himself says nothing. It seems most likely that it was he who sold the documents to Schwarzkoppen. And yet we must not

call him traitor, for that is a crime he is not capable of. Where there is no sense of patriotism there can be no consciousness of treason. In his times, four hundred years ago, everybody did it. We will call him merely a *condottiere* drifted into his wrong century.

XIV.

A DRAWN BATTLE AND A ROUT.

THE 24th of August was a day of resounding battle. It began, tamely enough, with the fag end of Dreyfus's contemporaries on the General Staff. But presently "Bring in Colonel Maurel," says the President. Colonel Maurel was President of the 1894 Court-Martial which condemned Dreyfus. As the lean face and huge red epaulettes of the little sergeant-usher appeared, preceding somebody to the platform, silence swept over the hall, and eyes unconsciously turned to Labori.

The Colonel—he is now retired—was a shrunken man, in a shapeless, shabby frock coat; his face was small, his forehead was low, his nose concave and sharp-pointed, his skin grey-green, his back humped. He had just learned of an accident — I am afraid a fatal one—to one of his children.

But, making all allowance, you sat aghast that such a mean and broken atrophy should have commanded a regiment and presided over the case that has shaken France like an earthquake. He quavered through his deposition in a voice like himself; he had formed his opinions on the evidence—especially on that of Bertillon, Du Paty, and Henry—and so, he believed, had the other judges. Yes; a communication had been received from General Mercier, to be used in clearly defined conditions of time and place; it was brought, not by Picquart, as that witness had sworn, but by Du Paty de Clam.

He quavered to the end: "I have nothing else to say." Then upheaved himself Labori.

"What were the documents communicated?"

The astounding answer came—"I do not know. I read out the first document; I did not read the others because my conviction was formed." Gently, almost tenderly—his habit when not resisted—Labori put in the deadly retort. Colonel Maurel, as judge, knew that he must conscientiously seek light

on the whole case: he knew that a communication he received from the Minister must be sincere and give both sides of the question—for the accused as well as against. Why then did he not read the documents all through?

"I cannot answer," faltered the weak reply. Labori asked for Captain Freystaetter, who was a member of that Court-Martial, but he was not there. Then he asked for Mercier. He had not yet cross-examined the General, he mildly explained, because of his wound. "As General Mercier is present," said the President, "I ask him kindly to step forward." Up stepped the neat, familiar figure; he was in uniform. It was business. It was to the death. The Court hushed again, feeling tight at the heart. The Commissary of the Government was frankly frightened: he begged that Labori would not discuss things. "If Major Carrière is laying down rules on which we are agreed," said the advocate sweetly, "well and good. If he means to give me lessons, I do not accept them." "I beg you not to discuss," said the President.

And the fight began. To look at the two you would have said there was only one in it. Mercier was small, by comparison, and slight: in the tight black tunic and red trousers of his uniform he looked yet slighter. His oratorical equipment was slender: he had but one gesture, a cramped movement of the right arm, otherwise he kept his white gloved hands behind his back. His voice was deep, yet hard and dry like the croak of a bird of prey. His mental equipment we knew to be small also. As he turned to face Labori—low forehead, hooked nose, sallow colour, heavy eyelids and skin hanging loose from cheek bone to neck—he looked more like a vulture than ever. Above him towered Labori, the great loose-jointed figure wreathed in the gown that hung round him like a black toga—Labori with the gestures that fly to meet the word, and the voice that draws like music and shakes like thunder—Labori, the practised cross-questioner, the enthusiast, the man who has nothing against him, the man with all the advantage of attack. What possibility of anything but defeat for the General? But Mercier took

up his position and faced doggedly towards his enemy. The fight began.

Labori opened with the grounds for the charge against Dreyfus in 1894. Were there other charges besides the *bordereau?* Yes—the secret *dossier.* Then why did General Mercier not tell the other Ministers? He told M. Hanotaux that he would not prosecute on the *bordereau* unless there were other charges. Now, if there were, why did he not speak of them? If there were not—but he has just said there were. "I made no engagement with M. Hanotaux." Then General Mercier contradicts—that is the most moderate word—M. Hanotaux. The Council will remember that. Now if the former charges were serious, why was the *bordereau* dictated to Dreyfus by Du Paty? Why did Du Paty say that if Dreyfus succeeded there, he would not be arrested? "It would be one charge the more." "Then the former charges"—the rich voice filled the breathless room—"the former charges were not convincing."

He beat him back on "I had a certain indecision;" he buffeted him thence to "No,

there were as yet only presumptions." But buffeted as he was, Mercier still folded his white gloves coolly behind his back, still held up his obstinate head. Labori went on to the sudden arrest: was that because Mercier was being attacked in the Press? But here he did not gain a foot; Mercier was accustomed to being attacked in the Press; he did not care. Labori produced a letter showing that Henry was working with the *Libre Parole* to force the Minister's hand; Mercier sullenly wondered whether it was forged. Labori brought his battery up to shorter range: why was the *bordereau* originally assigned to April? Mercier did not know. Not know? Then M. le Général in 1894 was completely ignorant of the arguments for Dreyfus's guilt? Back goes Mercier a foot: not completely, but ignorant of the details. Was the *bordereau* then a detail? Mercier stands fast: no, but it was the prosecutor's business, not his, to fix its date.

So shifted back and forth the stubborn duel. Mercier was retreating nearly always, but retreating slowly, doggedly, with his rearguard facing the enemy. He refused to

give any account of his thoughts; it was quite enough, he grimly said, to have to answer for one's words and deeds. When Labori spoke of his examination as an "interrogatory"—the word used for the examination of an accused person—and as a "discussion," Mercier turned sharply, and for the moment beat him back. Once he counter-attacked smartly. "I ask," said Labori, "what has been done with the thirty-five million francs which, according to General Mercier, have been sent from England and Germany for the cause of Dreyfus?" "Perhaps I might ask you that," retorted the General.

Again and again Labori drove him to silence or refusal to answer; but he never broke him up. The big man used every artifice of eloquence and forensic cleverness; you could see his face and all his gestures, and he seemed a terrible antagonist. Of the little man you could only see the smooth, narrow back of his head and the clasped white gloves. He looked once more like a naughty boy before his schoolmaster. But he stood up doggedly under his punishment; he came

up again gamely after every blow. The cold, passionless voice never faltered. As he had showed no hate before Dreyfus, so he showed no fear before Labori. He was still the Grand Inquisitor—the man who was as ready to stand torture for his own faith as to torture others for theirs.

Labori shifted his battery to yet another position. The letter of Panizzardi, presumably to Schwarzkoppen, beginning, "I send you the manual"—the letter of which Henry cut off the top and the bottom for his forgery, the letter which bears the date "June, 1894," in red ink at the top—when did that come into the Intelligence Department? Mercier thought that perhaps General Gonse would know. General Gonse came up, and in a second the whole hall was in a tumult, and the duel had become a general action. Officer after officer sprang up in the body of the hall, dashed on to the platform, took up position, unlimbered, opened fire. Gonse, nervous and reluctant; Roget, waving his hand, dancing about the platform, his neat white moustache bristling with rage; Gribelin the

archivist, delighted to hear his voice again; Lauth eager, but cool and ready — the Alsatian!—when everybody else was losing his head; Carrière, the Government Commissary, fearful of what this wild bull of a Labori would do next—they were all six of them in action together. Mercier, Roget, and Gribelin in the firing line, Gonse and Lauth in support, Carrière in reserve—and Labori against the six, pouring in invective, logic, satire like case-shot. The echoes of the cannonade were tossed from wall to wall and mingled in murmurs under the roof. Then they sank and stilled as suddenly as they had risen. A three-cornered colloquy was going on between Labori, Mercier, and General Chamoin, the courteous, bald-headed gentleman in charge of the secret *dossier*. And then Labori and Mercier were both limbering up and drawing off their guns for the day.

It was a defeat for Mercier, and yet it had not been the rout his enemies had hoped for. He had made important admissions. He had allowed that his knowledge of the Dreyfus case, and even his conviction of his guilt,

dated from a period subsequent to the trial of 1894—that is, were formed at a time when, in moral and professional self-defence, he was in a way bound to hold Dreyfus guilty. It had been made clear that if the *bordereau* was written in August, 1894, Panizzardi's letter about the manual, dated June, 1894, was, supposing it and its date to be genuine, no evidence against Dreyfus. Thirdly, and most damaging for Mercier, was General Chamoin's statement that Mercier had communicated to him from Colonel Du Paty de Clam a version of the Panizzardi telegram beginning with the words, "The Ministry of War have a report or a proof of a secret offer made by Dreyfus to Germany." This was, of course, a wilful and diabolical falsification. All this was bad for Mercier.—established him a criminal, if anybody had cared about that. On the other hand, Labori had got nothing else of significance out of him. And one very important point Mercier had made—that whatever had or had not been done in 1894 was irrelevant, that the decision of the first Court-Martial had been quashed,

and that the only question now was the original one — whether or not Dreyfus gave up secrets to a foreign Power. Thus Mercier astutely withdrew his weakest point out of fire.

* * * *

The finish and crushing climax of this fight came two days later. Captain Freystaetter, one of the judges of 1894, had been called for on the 24th, but was not present. On the 26th, sandwiched between two devastating experts in handwriting, he was suddenly there.

He came up on the platform—the manliest figure of a man that had yet stood on it. Under the uniform—black tunic, dark blue trousers—of the Marine Infantry you could see that while not very tall, he was broad, and built with great strength. He wore a long moustache and pointed beard, his cropped hair was prematurely grey, his face lined and worn to a brow, nose, cheek-bone and chin, yet hard, steadfast, and resolute. Were he an Englishman you would put him down to the Navy; and it did not need the

four war-medals on his breast to tell you that while other men in this case were riding in the Bois, Freystaetter had been pushing through the jungles of Tongking and Madagascar. But more than that was in his face —in the contracted brows and the eyes half hunted, half determined. I had noticed it that morning in the hotel as he moved from seat to seat, picked up papers and threw them down next second, could settle to nothing. It was the face of a man who has been on bad terms with his conscience, who knows that to reconcile himself with it will mean the loss of half his friends, may likely mean the ruin of his whole life—and who is about to do it.

He took the oath and in a firm voice began to speak. The sleepy hall looked up—and in thirty seconds it was awake, breathless, pulseless, trembling. Freystaetter used no preface, told no story, made no speech. He simply stood up and said, "I was a member of the 1894 Court-Martial. My conviction was formed on the evidence of the experts, of Du Paty and of Henry. Only I must add that I was slightly influenced by the secret

documents communicated. They were (1) a biographical notice charging Dreyfus with treason committed at the School of Pyrotechnic at Bourges, at the Ecole de Guerre, and on the General Staff; (2) the *canaille de D——* document; (3) the Davignon letter; (4) a telegram from a foreign military attaché definitely asserting the guilt of the accused. This telegram, if I remember right, ran: *Dreyfus arrested, emissary warned.*" The whole hall leapt with excitement. It did not need Labori rushing in to follow up the blow to remind us that here was a telegram that really exculpated Dreyfus presented in a falsified form to inculpate him —when General Mercier had sworn it was never presented at all. Or that here were four documents read out—when Colonel Maurel had sworn he had read but one. We had come to it at last—the lie direct.

In dead silence Maurel quaked up to the platform and turned a green face, not towards the President, but up towards Labori. His voice was all but a shriek, yet clear, as he raised a forefinger and said, "I said I only read one document, but I did not say that

only one was read." A low roar thrilled from the hall. He went on, "As M. Freystaetter has told all, I passed the papers to my neighbour, saying I was tired." Again that muffled roar of wonder, of indignation, of anguished agitation. "Had the telegram the words *Emissary warned?*" "I do not remember. I only read the documents in a listless way." Then broke in again the voice of Freystaetter, harsh with emotion, but loud and insistent. "Not only did I read them, but Colonel Maurel had them all in his hands and commented on each as he passed it to us."

General Mercier came up to the bar, unflinching as ever, and even the cold inquisitor's voice rang with passion. "What was the document betrayed by Dreyfus at the School of Pyrotechnic?"

"It concerned a shell."

"Then Captain Freystaetter is caught in the act of lying. The Robin shell was not betrayed until 1895. As for the telegram, I still maintain it was not shown to the Council."

Freystaetter stood with his képi crushed

under his arm, his head and jaw thrust forward as he turned on Mercier with all the stubborn rage of a fighter and a little of the contempt of a plain man for a liar. "I say the words were in the telegram," he hoarsely cried. "I never said that there was a telegram or any document whatever speaking of a shell. I simply said that there was in the commentary an accusation which concerned treason at the School of Pyrotechnic, and that that treason did concern a shell. I am saying nothing to-day of which I am not absolutely sure." Every soul in court believed him.

"I must insist that M. Du Paty de Clam be medically examined," cried Labori. "General Mercier says Du Paty made up the packet." "I did not," said Mercier, fighting to the last, "I said that I did not make it up myself." Now the hall was dead silent as with consternation. We seemed to be on the very brink of who knew what bottomless abyss of fraud. "I now learn," added Mercier, "from General de Boisdeffre that it was Colonel Sandherr."

On the choking hall fell the rich thrilling

voice of Labori. "Dead," he said—"always the dead. Sandherr dead! Henry dead! Du Paty de Clam does not come."

The President checked him sharply, and heaving agitation sank to the mill-pond of expert evidence in handwriting. Captain Freystaetter came down looking like a brave man who had seen the Devil—scared but defiant. He sat down all by himself, neither with the Dreyfusard witnesses nor with the Anti-Dreyfusards. In the place reserved for simple soldiers, who serve France, eschew party and tell the truth, he sat down alone.

XV.

THE EXPERTS.

THERE was once a time, in the childhood of the world, when we were anxious to see Dreyfus taken to and from the court of a morning. In those simple days they set a watch about all the streets whence he could possibly be seen. As you approach the Lycée, out of the speckless, leisurely streets of Rennes, you come on a barrier of armed men. Eight cavalry horses are yawning over eight troopers, who hold their bridles as they sit on chairs in the middle of the road. Half a dozen infantry soldiers sit on chairs on the pavement. Two gendarmes sit on chairs in the gutter.

A little white ticket will take you through the cordon, and you are under the walls of the Lycée. A buzz issues through the windows. Half way along the wall is a wooden water-pipe, down which trickles a scanty rivulet of envelopes—news of the

Dreyfus case. About the lower end of it a gendarme and about half a dozen messenger boys sit on chairs. As you pass in—I say "you"; anybody that likes can borrow a ticket and pass in to-day—there are half a dozen soldiers sitting on a seat and spitting on the flags. The courtyard is thickly sprinkled with witnesses and journalists smoking cigarettes. In the hall itself, before the judges, a bald, grey-bearded old gentleman, with a baggy jacket and incredibly short legs, is sitting in a chair and giving his views on handwriting. His name is Belhomme, and there is no need to say more of him than Esterhazy, whose cause he is pleading, has put on record—"This Belhomme is an idiot; you have only to look at him!" The whole hall—judges, counsel, public—looks as if a shrapnel shell had burst over it. Some are flung backwards, with their heads over the backs of chairs; some have fallen heavily forward, with their heads on tables; some heads have collapsed into chests; all are half dead.

The experts in handwriting began on Friday morning, the 25th of August; it was

now the 29th, and they were not over yet. All but the two first were inaudible; it mattered the less in that they all contradicted each other positively. Of the two audible one was irrelevant and the other incomprehensible. The first appeared to the unofficial public as a bald head and the back of the amplest frock coat I ever saw. In front of these was M. Gobert, expert, as he assured us in a fat voice, to the Bank of France. "That means something," whispered an enthusiast beside me, and so it doubtless does, only neither that nor anything else could mean all that M. Gobert meant it to mean. On the strength of being expert to the Bank of France, M. Gobert gave a detailed history of the commencement of the Dreyfus case. He described the bearing of various generals, which appeared to him highly suspicious. For example, one day he found General de Boisdeffre surrounded by a group of officers; but on his appearance the General asked them to go away. That reminded M. Gobert (expert to the Bank of France) that in 1894 he was treated as a suspect witness because he wished, before giving

his conclusion, to know the name of the accused. "But I will not complain," he said magnanimously, after complaining for a quarter of an hour; "that unfortunate," he waved himself towards Dreyfus, "has suffered more than I have." After that he talked for half an hour about himself, and suddenly said, "Gentlemen, I do not wish to speak much of myself; but I will; for, gentlemen, I am expert to the Bank of France." At the end he said, "I am sorry my time is limited; otherwise I could prove to you the date of the *bordereau*." Now the date of the *bordereau* is the principal crux of the case. "I do not insist," added the magnanimous Gobert.

"If you can tell us you may," said the President, ever hopeful of enlightenment. "Why, then, there is a letter of Esterhazy dated August 17th, which I call the key of the Dreyfus case. It is written on the same paper as the *bordereau*, and in it he says he has just been for a fortnight to the school of firing at Châlons. The *bordereau* concludes with the phrase, 'I am just starting for the manœuvres.' That phrase," said the

expert slowly, "has its importance." (It has been discussed by all the master-minds of France for five years.) "Now Esterhazy on August 17th had just been to the manœuvres for a fortnight, therefore he was just going to the manœuvres about July 25th. That," he added with the proud humility of the true discoverer, "I give you for what it is worth." As everybody knew the facts and everybody had discussed the inference for the first fortnight or so of the trial, there seemed to be an impression that it was not worth very much. One of the judges had the idea to ask him some questions as to handwriting, but on that point the expert to the Bank of France was jejune. "I did notice something," he said, "but I have forgotten the details."

He went off heavily, and M. Bertillon bounded on to the scene.

He was a little man in a black frock-coat, and more and blacker hair than you would think could grow—his head a hogged mane, his cheeks and lips and chin like the bursting of an over-stuffed sofa. You felt that if you passed your hand over his head it would

draw blood from you and sparks of electricity from him. He bounded up, and then turned and looked behind him: toiling in his rear were four soldiers, stalwart beyond the wont of France, bent double under a table and vast portfolios. These were his professional properties — the plant wherewith he was about to demonstrate mathematically the new Bertillon system—the guilt of Dreyfus.

In a low but firm and rapid voice he began to expound. Presently, warming to his work, he leaped upon his portfolio, tore it open, and dashed at the President with a framed photograph. He darted from judge to judge; the Government Commissary and the Registrar and the counsel gathered round, till nothing remained of Bertillon but a muffled patter and a central wriggle. Then, suddenly, with a wild whoop, he burst out of the throng, waving the frame round and round his head like a tomahawk. "Five millimetres reticulation," he yelled in triumph; "12.5 centimetres gabarit and a millimetre and a quarter imbrication! Always you find it—always—always!"

I desire to speak with respect of the new

Bertillon system, because the other day I almost understood it. It begins thus. Here is the *bordereau*: is it a genuine document or a forgery? I rule horizontal and vertical lines over it at a distance of five millimetres, and what do I find? I find that the words which occur twice—*manœuvres*, *modification*, *disposition*, *copie*—all begin, within a millimetre, in exactly the same part of one of the squares I have ruled. It is 1 chance in 5 this might happen in any single case; against its happening in all these cases it is 16 in 10,000. Add all the other words—which he did not specify—that follow the same law, and the chance becomes 100,000,000 to 1. Conclusion: this could not happen naturally. The *bordereau* is forged.

Now, who forged it, and why? Take, again, the polysyllables that are repeated in the *bordereau*—*manœuvres*, *modification*, and the rest. Place one over the other, and you find the beginnings coincide, while the ends do not. But shift the word that comes earliest a millimetre and a quarter to the right, and the ends coincide also.

This is all very curious. But when I

came to examine the writing of Alfred Dreyfus done in the War Office, imagine my astonishment to find that it also presented the same peculiarities. Only there were many letters in the *bordereau* which differed from those used by Dreyfus—particularly an "o," in the form of a little circle in the line connecting the letters before and after it, and a double "s," with the first letter short and the second long, whereas Dreyfus made the first "s" long and the second short.

Next I took the letters seized in Dreyfus's house. Imagine my astonishment to find that the writing of Mme. Dreyfus and Mathieu Dreyfus presented exactly the forms of letters used in the *bordereau*, except the double "s"! Then I found a letter dated "Mühlhausen," and signed "Alice"; imagine my astonishment to find that Alice made her double "s" exactly like the writer of the *bordereau!* Then I investigated a letter of Mathieu Dreyfus—a year old—found in the prisoner's blotting book. Imagine my astonishment to find that its polysyllables presented just the

same phenomena as those of the *bordereau* and Alfred Dreyfus's work at the War Office! It contained the phrase "*quelques renseignements*," which is also in the *bordereau*; place one on the other, and the beginning and end coincide; shift the phrase from the blotting-book a millimetre and a quarter to the right, and—imagine—my—astonishment!—the middles coincide also.

Now, why was it done? It is obvious who did it. Who but Dreyfus had access both to the War Office and his own blotting-book? The case is now clear. Dreyfus wished, in case his treason was detected, to have a defence ready. Therefore he forged the document to imitate his own writing with touches of his wife's and Mathieu's and Alice's. If his treasonable documents were found on him—as in his overcoat or in his desk at the War Office—he could say, "This is a forgery—a plot against me!" and demonstrate by the five-millimetre squares and coincidences of words that the thing was traced. If the thing were found on him at the War Office he could point to the official documents he had written as the basis of the fraud; if at

home, to Mathieu's letter and his wife's and Alice's. If, on the other hand, one of his documents went astray, undated and unsigned, and were recognised as his handwriting—which is what actually did happen—he could point to Mathieu's "o" and Alice's double "s" as proofs that it must be in the handwriting of somebody else.

Nay, more; he actually did begin that contemplated defence. He said to Henry and to Cochefert that this was a plot. He said to Du Paty de Clam, "They have stolen my handwriting." He said to d'Ormescheville, "They have taken bits from a letter of mine." Why, then, did he not pursue that line of defence? Because he saw I had detected him. "When he heard me say 'demicentimetric reticulations,'" said M. Bertillon, with pardonable pride, "his face congestioned, and he said, audibly, 'the wretch!'"

But how did he do it? He could not have a model ready of every word he was ever likely to use; therefore he could not have traced the *bordereau* from his War Office letters nor yet from the writing of Alice

or Mathieu. The explanation lies in one word—gabarit. A gabarit, as its inventor handsomely allows, might just as well be called anything else; however, we will go on calling it gabarit. I like the sound. A gabarit is a master-word slid along the line of writing under the thin paper you are writing on. You form your letters on it. When the letter under your pen is not the letter you want to write you retouch it, just as you might retouch and alter letters of your own writing into something else—could make "o" into "d," for instance, or "i" into "l." Dreyfus's gabaritic master-word was *intérêt*, written end to end again and again. Only it was written not in one series, but in two, one over the other—the second beginning a millimetre and a quarter to the right of the beginning of the first. That accounts for the coincidence of the two "*quelques renseignements*" and the other repeated polysyllables when you shift them that distance. Dreyfus began the long words on letters of one of the chains formed by the word "*intérêt*," and then in the middle of it shifted on to the other. The idea was to

vary the writing and make it look natural; at the same time he knew that, if it suited his defence, he could always show that it was traced.

So, if you write *intérêtintérêtintérêt* . . . long enough and then write over it—beginning a millimetre and a quarter to the right of the leftmost point of the first "i"—*intérêt-intérêtintérêt* . . . again—there is your gabarit, and you can write the *bordereau* for yourself just as surely as Dreyfus did. And that is the new Bertillon system.

Gabarit: the new parlour game—it will be an excellent amusement for the long winter evenings. However, as I say, it should be taken seriously, for it is amazingly clever. If I had seen the diagrams I should probably understand it better and think it cleverer still. We know from Captain Freystaetter that it impressed the Court-Martial of 1894; I think it also impressed the Court-Martial of 1899. It seems to me a perfectly feasible and convenient way of disguising your hand, and I do not dare to criticise it on its own ground. I will only say that it seems also a very convenient way

of proving to a half-honest man, who wishes to believe Dreyfus guilty, that Dreyfus is guilty.

As for its parent, when he had finished his deposition he had finished the Dreyfus case. He did not even pretend to take any notice of his cross-examination. He trotted up and down about the platform packing up his luggage; if anybody asked a question, he just looked up and said, "Very likely. I don't know. I don't care."

And then on the top of him came a gentleman named Matthias George Paraf Javal. (That would make a good gabarit, by the way—*parafjavalparafjavalparafjav* . . .) He brought a blackboard, at which he shook his fist and made most horrible grimaces, expounding the while in a squeaky voice the theory that Bertillon's measurements are all wrong, and that the *bordereau* does not as a matter of fact fit the gabarit. Later came on M. Bernard, a mining engineer—of course, he would know—explaining that Bertillon's theory is the negation of all logic and the abrogation of the laws of probability. We may leave it to them to fight out, which

they were only too anxious to do; only, happily, the President would not let them have it out in court.

In the meantime I—if I may—will suggest one or two considerations of my own. The weak point of the system is that it was too plainly built on Dreyfus's guilt instead of Dreyfus's guilt resulting from it. If I were a traitor and wanted to mix somebody else's handwriting with my own, I should not select my wife's and my brother's; and if I used Alice's, I should not leave her letters lying about my house. If I were clever enough to use a master-word so as to disclaim my writing in case of detection, I should probably be clever enough to know that in case of detection my house would certainly be searched, and I should not leave my master-word lying in my blotting-book. Finally, if I were such a careful traitor as to write on a master-word, I should not send covering letters with my documents at all. M. Bertillon asked himself this question—Why the covering letter?—and concluded that it was written on the master-word as a means of defence, as explained above. But presumably

the documents of which the *bordereau* speaks were also written on the gabarit, since they were just as likely to be seized or to miscarry as the covering letter. It would be no use disguising the one and not the other, and if the documents were disguised, why send the *bordereau?* Rather than go out of my way to run unnecessary risk and do unnecessary work on a gabarit, I should almost choose not to be a traitor at all.

XVI.

The Confession.

If a prisoner in England were stated to have made a confession of guilt sandwiched between two energetic protestations of innocence; if he had at no other time made anything even distantly resembling a confession; if the supposed confession rested on the testimony of only one living witness; if that witness had sometimes asserted and sometimes denied the statement he came into court to support; if the confession had not been made public for over two years from the time it was said to have been made; if the witness to it acknowledged that, having made a note of the words used some thirty hours after the event, he had kept it three years and then suddenly destroyed it, at the moment when it became public property; if, finally, the prisoner, knowing nothing of the fact that the alleged confession had been published, had been interrogated on the

subject, and had quoted his expression in words which almost exactly coincided with the alleged confession, yet meant something absolutely different and contradictory—what would an English judge say to such a confession?

You do not need me to tell you. The English judge would refuse to hear another word of it. But the French, in perfect good faith, look at confessions in quite a different way. Our justice aims at proving a man did a thing; that of France at inducing him to say he did it. The whole duty of a *juge d'instruction*—all the browbeating cross-examination which is volleyed from the bench at a French prisoner, and which seems to us so contrary to the spirit of justice—is founded on the theory that the best, even the only satisfactory, proof of guilt is the confession of the accused. "Has he confessed?" is the Frenchman's first question when he hears a man is arrested. And, having been brought up in the belief that confession is the first duty of a criminal, he usually has.

Therefore this alleged confession of Dreyfus, half an hour before his degradation,

to Lebrun-Renault, the captain of gendarmes who was on guard over him, has been considered of capital importance by most Frenchmen. Some of the principal witnesses in this very trial said that they placed it first among the evidences of guilt. It was first made public by M. Cavaignac in the Chamber in 1898, and was ordered to be posted up in every commune in France. Lebrun-Renault leaped in a day from nothingness to universal fame.

On the last day of August we began the public sitting late; the Court had sat with closed doors to consider technical and very secret questions of artillery. Nobody quite knew who would be the first witness in the public part of the sitting. A man was fetched in by the usher in a dark uniform; as he went up to the bar I noticed that he wore a shiny black belt, unlike an officer, just like a gendarme. He was a big, beefy man with a big, ruddy, square-cheeked face and a very big moustache; he had the air of being strong but not well knit—power without the activity to apply it. He saluted the Court with a tremendous flourish, and I

said to myself that he looked very much less like a soldier than a policeman. Next instant, in an abrupt voice as big as himself, he announced his name—Lebrun-Renault.

He gave his evidence like a policeman—like a policeman who has light-heartedly given evidence against a prisoner on what he thought a matter of forty shillings or a week, and then finds himself before the House of Lords. He told his story simply, unhesitatingly and very loudly; but his words came out in jerky mouthfuls that seemed to suggest nervousness. To my mind he was quite sure he was telling the truth, but was a little frightened of the enormous importance that had suddenly fallen upon him. You can judge of his simple nature when he said, "I spoke to him of New Caledonia, which I knew, and where I thought he might be sent; in short, I behaved to Captain Dreyfus with all possible humanity." But when it came to cross-examination he resolutely refused to be drawn. Before the Cour de Cassation he had said, in his beefy, unjudicial way, "The declarations of Dreyfus can quite well be considered as not a confession:" it

was plain to the eye that Lebrun-Renault was perfectly ready from day to day to consider anything as either itself or its opposite. To-day, however, he was more wary. "Consider it what you like," he said with breezy tolerance. "Some may consider it a confession, others an explanation of his conduct. That is every man's own affair. I give no opinion. I only judge the fact. Dreyfus said so and so to me; that's all." He did indeed explain his own conduct in one particular: General Mercier sent him to tell the President of the confession next day, but he did not do so because he overheard somebody in Casimir-Perier's room speaking rudely of him. With this one exception Lebrun-Renault told his story, but bluntly declined to do any thinking about it. Thinking, he all but admitted, was not his strong point.

However, Lebrun-Renault's statement was not all. He said that there was also in the room at the time a Captain d'Attel, who is now dead. So next, in the French manner, we had a captain to swear that d'Attel told him he had heard Dreyfus confess, and then a lieutenant-colonel to swear that Lebrun-

Renault told him he had heard Dreyfus confess, and then a major to swear that the captain had told him that d'Attel had told him that Dreyfus had confessed, and then a first-class controller to swear that the lieutenant-colonel had told him that Lebrun-Renault had told him that Dreyfus had confessed. I was waiting to hear myself called on to swear I had heard the controller tell the Court that the lieutenant-colonel told him Lebrun-Renault told him Dreyfus had told him he delivered documents—when I heard General Gonse admitting that when challenged by Picquart as to the guilt of Dreyfus he said nothing about the alleged confession. Presently came on a retired Major—Forzinetti, by the same token, who was governor of the Cherche-Midi prison while Dreyfus was there, and lost his post for proclaiming a belief in his innocence. He said, first, that he knew d'Attel well, and was sure from his character that if he had heard Dreyfus confess he would have said so in his private conversation, and also would have reported the fact officially, whereas, in fact, he had done

neither. Second, said Forzinetti, Lebrun-Renault had told him that Dreyfus made no confession, and that he had said as much to General Mercier at the time. This Lebrun-Renault admitted quite cheerfully, but said he denied the confession under orders from his superiors. And now you are as fit as I am to form an opinion whether Dreyfus confessed or not.

It is just another of the hopeless mazes of discrepancy and contradiction which make you despair of human certitude and human veracity, and especially of getting to the bottom of the Dreyfus case. And there have been two or three other speeches attributed to Dreyfus which mystify the mystery still further. One of his guards deposed before the Cour de Cassation that he heard Dreyfus say—"As for being guilty, I am guilty, but I am not the only one." He was answered, "Then why do you not give the names you know?" Whereto Dreyfus is said to have replied, "They will be known in two or three years." This tale was discredited at the time and was not repeated at Rennes. In prison he is said to have begged that he

might be taken away for a year under police surveillance while the affair was more thoroughly investigated. And he is said to have said before several witnesses, "In three years I shall return and justice will be done me." Taking all these things together, the haunting doubt floats down on you again: what is there, you ask yourself, that is at the bottom of all this but will not come up? Were there accomplices in the War Office, who promised the scapegoat that he should be sacrificed only for three years—and then broke their promise for their own greater safety, knowing that Dreyfus could never accuse them without doubly damning himself?

Or else there are two other suppositions. One is that Lebrun-Renault honestly mistook something he really heard. His reports of the words have not been precisely consistent. But before the Cour de Cassation he quoted Dreyfus thus: "I am innocent. In three years my innocence will be recognized. The Minister knows it, and a few days ago Major Du Paty de Clam came to see me in my cell and said that the Minister knew

it. The Minister knew that if I had* delivered documents to Germany they were of no importance, and that it was to get more important ones in exchange." Dreyfus, interrogated on Devil's Island eleven days later, and not knowing the text of this evidence, said his words were: "The Minister knows well that I am innocent. He sent Du Paty de Clam to me to ask if I had not given up some unimportant documents to get others in exchange for them. I answered no." If you cut out of Lebrun-Renault's version the repeated words, "the Minister knew it," and the full stop, you get Dreyfus's version almost word for word. On this showing it does look very much as if the gendarme misunderstood words which Dreyfus really did use.

The other supposition is less agreeable. The rumour of a confession having got into the Paris papers, always hospitable to the wildest and most unauthenticated tale,

* M. Cavaignac's version, copied from Lebrun-Renault's note-book, and Lebrun-Renault's own deposition at Rennes, say instead of "had" "have."

Generals Mercier and Gonse sought out Lebrun-Renault next day, and persuaded him by bribes or threats, or simply by cleverly insinuating ideas into his bovine head, to say that Dreyfus confessed. He was too afraid of his new story to repeat it to the President, but having written it down—this after he had seen the generals, mark you—gained confidence. Thereafter he talked of the confession at large, sometimes affirming and sometimes denying it, according to the fancy of the moment. But whenever there was a trial concerned with the Dreyfus case, the generals always brought him up to the scratch to affirm again.

You will say that it is too cynical to hold this second view when it is possible to hold the first. Perhaps. Yet the truth is that Mercier and Gonse have committed and admitted in court so many acts of scoundrelism that I believe them to be—like Habbakuk, whom Gonse resembles personally—capable of anything.

XVII.

The Defence.

Summer passed into autumn. The mornings nipped, the evenings dripped, and the leaves were yellowing; and still the Dreyfus case went on. Presently Indian summer came in on autumn—the sultriest, steamingest days we had known even in sultry Rennes; still the Dreyfus case went on. But even the Dreyfus case was yellowing, too. A few days more would see the last of it, and, with a tightening of the heart, men began to reckon the chances.

Many thousands of words have been shed in vain if you do not understand by now that the trial of Dreyfus was not in the very least like a trial in England. To begin with, there were the two trials going on at the same time in alternate chains, like M. Bertillon's gabarit—the Dreyfus case and the Esterhazy case. If one was proved guilty—which, in the first days of September, neither had

been—the other was automatically acquitted. Then there were the tributaries of the main stream—the Picquart, Henry, Du Paty de Clam, and Mercier cases. But for the last week—thanks largely to the efforts of M. le Président—we had left these almost entirely aside. We were gripping ourselves for the finish upon the Dreyfus-Esterhazy case.

For another point of dissimilarity to England, the defence had been going on more or less all the time parallel to the prosecution. We had Bertulus and Picquart for, sandwiched between Roget and Cuignet against. Freystaetter cropped up in the middle of the handwriting experts, and the experts themselves came in alternate layers of for and against.

The experts, indeed, were the point of transition from attack to defence. Up to them the witnesses had mostly accused; after them began the defence proper. It also was mixed up with stray witnesses for the prosecution, who had somehow got shuffled into the wrong pack. But the five main divisions of the prosecution—the secret documents, the presumptions supplied by the

bordereau, the personal demeanour of Dreyfus on the General Staff, the handwriting of the *bordereau*, and the alleged confession—had been all finally presented; and by September 6th we were at the end of the testimony that had been presented to rebut them.

This period of the defence was a duel between two men—Roget and Labori. Mercier and Gonse had been badly discredited, Picquart was almost silent on the other side; Roget and Labori fought out the case to the finish. Roget was in truth playing advocate for the prosecution just as the other was for the defence. He had not been concerned even indirectly with any of the half-dozen branches of the affair: nominally a witness, he was there simply and solely to plead the cause of the generals. It was impossible not to admire the spirit, resolve and cleverness with which he fought the case. He was quite as good as a good lawyer. At every moment when the defence seemed to be scoring, his grey-white head rose out of the witnesses' seats with, "I ask to be heard." Every witness that seemed likely to weigh he

countervailed with one of his own. Labori cross-examined him; but he had no vulnerable point to assist attack, and Labori did little with him. He was never disconcerted; for every occasion he had a denial or a distinction, a repartee or a quibble, a gibe or a lie.

And yet to observers hitherto unprejudiced the only effect of Roget was to inspire a fierce partisanship for Dreyfus. The French admired Roget—his elastic if fleshy form, his ready smile and jest for the reporters, his elaborately graceful attitude on the platform, his turn to the audience after each hit, the bully's face thrust right into his opponent's with a sneer or an insult. To the stolider Anglo-Saxon all this was mere mummery; what they saw and detested was that Roget was obviously on the make. He was doing his utmost to destroy Dreyfus, not to save himself like the others, but to make himself. He, who stood only to win, was a bitterer foe to the broken prisoner than the men who stood to lose their all. From Dreyfus's second living grave he hoped to rise Governor of Paris, Minister of War,

perhaps President, perhaps—who knows?—higher yet. Such would have been a dishonourable ladder to fortune for anybody. For a soldier, of all men, to elect to make his career out of a medley of politics, law, diplomacy, intrigue and crime like the Dreyfus case, was almost too despicable to be worth despising.

But Roget, however you might hate him, was putting in good work for his side; Dreyfusards were not quite so sure of Labori. They thought he irritated the Court unnecessarily; also that he would have done better to stick to the points that bore directly on Dreyfus, as Demange did, instead of fighting the complex cases that have risen out of them. Labori was acting for Picquart quite as much as for Dreyfus; it was said —I know not whether truly or not—that he was actually briefed by Picquart, in which case it was of course his duty to plead for the man who paid him. You remember that Labori had been especially concerned with the later developments of the case; he had never so much as set eyes on Dreyfus till he saw him in the prison of Rennes. It must

be said too that the line between Dreyfus and Picquart was not easy to draw. The judges were evidently taking no interest at all in Picquart's case, and not very much in Esterhazy's: Dreyfus was the man they had to try, and they pined to confine the case to him. But whenever the President objected to a question of Labori's, it was comparatively easy for the lawyer to show that the charges against Picquart were used to invalidate his evidence against Esterhazy, which in turn was legitimately used on behalf of Dreyfus. It was difficult to draw the line, and Labori was able in the last days of the evidence to deal some resounding thwacks to Picquart's enemies. General Gonse he reduced to pulp. That decrepit model of Napoleon III. trembled visibly every time he was called up to the bar; his voice deserted him; he owned to dishonesty after dishonesty committed to keep Dreyfus in prison and Esterhazy free; in the end his very protestations of good faith became only a matter of form. This was effective politically, but legally it was futile, since Gonse had nothing to do with the Dreyfus case proper. But from General

Zurlinden, on September 6th, Labori won a most important admission: no less than that the General did not believe that Picquart forged the *petit bleu*—the more significant in that it was Zurlinden who arrested him on that charge.

The same day—the 6th—General Billot, emerging from slumber and hearing his name mentioned, trotted up on to the platform and delivered a short speech in defence of his action while Minister of War. He seemed, as always, thoroughly sincere, and moved to alternate rage and tears. Touching in the course of his remarks on the Dreyfus case, he incidentally threw out a suggestion that Dreyfus and Esterhazy might be accomplices in treason. He meant nothing by it—the worthy, kindly old man never means anything by anything—but in a second the whole court was in a tumult. Labori sprang up baying. Dreyfus sprang up livid, his snarl swelling to a howl. "I protest against this infamous assertion," he cried. "Maître Labori, be moderate," said the President. "I am moderate," roared Labori. "Your voice is not." "I am

not master of my voice." "Everybody is master of his own person." Retort struck fire on retort. The President's "sit down" came like rifle-cracks; Labori's "I will; but first I say——" like artillery. The President half rose and threatened with his white-gloved hand. Labori stood up and flung his arms wide; the eyes under his shaggy brows were lightning, and out of his deep chest crashed thunder. And then Labori said what he wanted to say. The storm sank more suddenly than it had burst; only the cheers and groans of its echoes were left reverberating among the audience.

Such contests—this was only a little louder than what happened every day—filled the enemies of Dreyfus with indignation and his friends with nervousness. Of these, some said Labori was over-impetuous, some that the President was unfair. I thought both were wrong. As a matter of fact, the questions of Labori which Jouaust refused to put were generally such as did not need putting—rhetorical points which, as Labori himself said often enough, had done their work as soon as he uttered them. It

was absurd to expect the Colonel to ask a General how he reconciled it with his conscience to do this or that. The Colonel would have been abused for life for sitting by and allowing the army to be insulted; and it would have done Labori no good, for a French general can reconcile it with his conscience to do anything. After all, though the scenes looked terrible, I do not think either President or advocate took them to heart. It looked most grave; either Jouaust, you would say, must have been cashiered or Labori disbarred. In reality it was all in the day's work to both of them.

But we must get back to the evidence—and now for the balance. Was it guilty or not guilty? The five parts of the case had been presented by the defence in the reverse order of their presentation by the attack. The confession and the experts came in the middle. Of Captain Lebrun-Renault and his supporters and their assertions and their admissions you have heard enough already. On the whole, that part of the case may be held to have cancelled itself out; certainly Lebrun-Renault was not unshaken enough nor

even sure enough of himself to send Dreyfus back to Devil's Island. The experts cancelled themselves out likewise. M. Bertillon made a great impression: his system is far too neat and superficially logical not to impress Frenchmen. But the counter-Bertillons—Paraf Javal and Bernard, who denied his theories and disputed his measurements—had their effect too. And of the handwriting experts proper—not that they matter much—the defence seemed to have the best authenticated. All these experts, except the obviously imbecile or utterly inaudible, were listened to with such attention by the judges that I think they also cannot but have cancelled each other out and left a net result of nothing.

The third branch of the accusation rested on the personal demeanour of Dreyfus. Almost every officer who was on the General Staff with him agreed that he was obsequious to his superiors, bumptious to his equals, greedy of information that might turn to his personal advantage, but inclined to shirk labours for whose results he could sponge on others without trouble to himself. The

defence had not tried to dispute this character; probably it is a true one; but with an intelligent and impartial Court it does not spell high treason.

The only relevant part of this branch of the evidence was that which charged Dreyfus with perpetually sneaking about the office in the wrong rooms and the wrong hours with a view to picking up secrets that did not concern him. To meet this, the defence produced, on September 1st, an officer of artillery named Major Ducros. He was engaged in the invention of a gun between 1891 and 1894, and was acquainted with another new and especially confidential gun, which was adopted by the French army. He knew Dreyfus, and appears to have been the only man who liked him. Several times he asked him to breakfast with a view to telling him all he knew. For a man who was selling artillery secrets this information would have been priceless; yet Dreyfus never came to breakfast, and never accepted the offers of information about the guns.

The next point was to get back to the *bordereau*. The endeavour of the early

witnesses for the prosecution — Mercier, Cavaignac, Roget—had been to show that Dreyfus alone was in a position to betray the secrets indicated in it; that Esterhazy certainly was not. Summarily, you may say that the tendency of the generals was to magnify the importance of the information betrayed, that of Picquart and Labori to water it down to what might be picked up by a major of infantry at a school of field-firing. Another point was to show that the language of the *bordereau* was technically incorrect, and therefore more applicable to Esterhazy than to Dreyfus. Accordingly for two days we fought our way through a jungle of artillery experts. The prosecution had a general of the name of Deloye —a gentleman with a long white beard that made him out a cross between Michael Angelo's Moses and a he-goat—who took two hours of closed doors to expound to the Council the innermost secrets of the hydro-pneumatic brake of the 120-millimetre short field-gun. On the other side was a major of the name of Hartmann—a big, chubby-faced man with almost the finest

moustache of the trial—who deposed at prodigious length, sometimes with open doors, sometimes with closed, on hydro-pneumatic brakes. The major, as does sometimes happen, appeared to know the subject far better than his general. The conclusion he came to was that if the traitor of the *bordereau* gave away detailed information, he must have been one of a very small number of officers employed either in the foundries or the office of the Director-General of Artillery; of which officers Dreyfus was not one. If the information was general, it was accessible to any officer of any arm who attended the manœuvres of 1894 at Châlons even for one day; of which officers Esterhazy was one.

For all that, the case against Esterhazy could hardly be called flourishing. Several journalists—among them an Englishman, Mr. Strong—proved that Esterhazy had made confessions, for newspaper purposes, of having written the *bordereau*. But in every case he had carefully added that he did it at the order of Colonel Sandherr, and that Dreyfus really did betray the documents

mentioned in it. This theory was so equally embarrassing to attack and defence that each believed as much of it as suited them, and the judges, I fancy, none of it. Then there was a Jewish lieutenant of artillery—one Bernheim—who swore that Esterhazy, whom he hardly knew, had borrowed a range-finder from him and, though often asked for it, had never returned it. More to the point was a fact which arose on the 6th, from an apparently rambling cross-examination by Labori about the *petit bleu:* that Count Münster had written to M. Delcassé in April this year, stating that Schwarzkoppen avowed he had sent a number of express letter-cards to Esterhazy, and the one intercepted might very probably be by him. That was as near proof of Esterhazy's treason as we could expect to get without Schwarzkoppen himself at the bar.

On the whole, you might say that attack and defence—leaving aside the secret *dossier*, which could not be very conclusive either way, or we should have heard more of it by now—were pretty evenly balanced. Both sides had tried to make out much the

same case on very similar evidence; and —if we rule out diplomatic evidence on the admitted French principle that all diplomatists always lie — neither Dreyfus nor Esterhazy had so far been proved guilty. An even balance ought to mean acquittal—only with seven French officers, who had probably made, and rightly made, Dreyfus's guilt an article of faith for five years, for whom Dreyfus's guilt stood till almost yesterday as a sign of trust in their legitimate chiefs, who had perhaps lost friends for the guilt of Dreyfus, whose moral and intellectual self-respect might almost depend on the guilt of Dreyfus—what of them? It was asking something of them to cast out the passions of years at the bidding of an academic benefit of the doubt.

The Dreyfusards had hoped — against reason, it seems to me—for some providential intervention that would make the prisoner's innocence clear beyond doubt or cavil. It had not come.

And then, at the very end of Saturday's evidence, came up a completely average

young Frenchman—open face, dark moustache, voluminous morning coat and light trousers—who began to lisp rapidly evidence about the *bordereau* and the manœuvres. He gave the name of Captain de Fond-Lamothe : nobody had ever heard it before ; he had never appeared in any of the previous Dreyfus cases ; nobody knew who he was. He explained that he was now an engineer, but that he had been with Dreyfus through the two years' course on the General Staff. "I love the army," he said, "and I have a brother in garrison here at Rennes. But it is my duty to say that the *bordereau* cannot be by any General Staff officer of Dreyfus's year. If it was written in April, he could not have had the firing-manual. If it was written in August, he could not have concluded, 'I am just going to the manœuvres.' For every one of us knew in May that we were not going to the manœuvres. Here is a circular distributed to us on May 17th that proves it. I beg that it be read." It was read. Dreyfusards glowed ; Anti-Dreyfusards went pale.

"And that," said M. de Fond-Lamothe,

lisping with terrific energy, "knocks the bottom out of the accusation."

And it did. Five generals hurried up to confute him, but not even Roget could hector him out of his syllogism. There was the circular; could anybody dispute it? Dreyfus had the circular; therefore he knew he was not going to the manœuvres; therefore he did not write the *bordereau*.

True, the undefeated Roget, after sleeping three nights on it, did come up with an answer. It was quite true, he said, that the circular made it certain that officers in Dreyfus's position could not go to the manœuvres, as hitherto, with a regiment; but they might go on a staff. As a matter of fact, he admitted, none did go, but that was because the General Staff office in Paris happened to be busy at the moment. Next day he produced a Major Hirschauer, who had been on the General Staff at the time—there seemed to be an inexhaustible number of such ready to swear to anything—who swore that Dreyfus was very anxious to go to the manœuvres. Dreyfus retorted that he certainly would have liked to go, but

never asked to; and Picquart, his chief at the time, bore him out. Further, Dreyfus added very cogently, the writer of the *bordereau* says, "I am just starting," not "I may soon start," or "I hope to start." The writer was certain of it, whereas he himself admittedly was not and could not be.

If he had only been as ready and as candid always, his chances would have looked very bright at this moment; but he was not always.

There was no getting over it: Dreyfus did not give the effect of a frank man. One day he made a particularly poor impression. The charge against him—do not laugh; it was serious for him—was a characteristically shaky one of M. Quesnay de Beaurepaire's, that he had followed German manœuvres about Mühlhausen. He had subsequently made this a subject for swagger, as was alleged, to one of his comrades. If he had said, "Yes, I was riding out near Mühlhausen and saw German regiments manœuvring. I stopped to look at them. Would not any of you, gentlemen, have done the same?" it would have been nothing at all. Instead

of that he paused, hesitated, stammered, asked to have a question repeated that was audible all down the hall. First he denied; then he qualified. First he said he had been present at no manœuvres; then that he may possibly have seen German regiments manœuvring; but that this was not, properly speaking, manœuvres. He felt that he was surrounded by people who would make the most of anything he admitted; and so he did not admit anything. He was afraid to tell the simple, innocent truth.

XVIII.

DEMANGE

GREAT events from little causes spring. The little cause was a young gentleman giving the name of Cernuschi. He described himself as an ex-officer of Austrian cavalry and a descendant of a Servian royal family; but he looked more like a Viennese waiter. He approached the judges with a bob like the bow of a jointed doll, and indicated that, not speaking French very well, he had, with the assistance of his wife, written on a piece of paper what he knew of the treason of Dreyfus. His knowledge appeared to be comprehensive but vague. He knew an official in a foreign embassy in France. This gentleman had warned him as a political refugee—such was Cernuschi's present profession—that Dreyfus might betray him to a foreign Power. This conformed with information he had received from a foreign officer, once near the person of his sovereign, but

now engaged as a spy. He had also seen at this officer's hotel numerous plans and other confidential French military papers. The spy had freely shown him these, with the remark, "Why have Jews unless you use them?" He begged to be allowed to name no names.

Such was the simple story of Cernuschi. He might have added that he had been put under restraint and dismissed the Austrian service for insanity, had been put under restraint at Zurich for the same reason, had abandoned his twin children at Caen, had swindled numerous people in Alençon, was in debt everywhere, and had been sold up—facts which came pouring into court in streams, and which would have materially increased the interest of his deposition. Three days afterwards he was ill and unable to attend for public examination; altogether he was not a happy effort of M. de Beaurepaire's.

But the consequences of M. Cernuschi seemed for the moment overwhelming. Labori was crouching over his desk ready for a spring. "As the other side," said he, "has

not hesitated to call in foreign testimony, from which we have always abstained, I shall ask the Court to find out by diplomatic channels whether the documents of the *bordereau* were given up, and to whom." He was not quite accurate, for Mr. Strong had already given evidence tending to Dreyfus's innocence, and the objection was rather to foreign official testimony than to foreign testimony as such. None the less, that afternoon Labori telegraphed to the German Emperor and the King of Italy, begging them to allow Schwarzkoppen and Panizzardi to come and give evidence at Rennes.

In an hour the whole case was once more turned topsy-turvy. Schwarzkoppen was the one man who not only knew the truth, but whom everybody knew to know it. With Schwarzkoppen at the bar the trial would begin all over again from a fresh point. It was the Dreyfus case all over, that just when it was in sight of its end, after twenty-seven days of evidence, a witness should be invoked who would make every word yet spoken not only stale, which

it notoriously was already, but also irrelevant. For a couple of days the Dreyfus affair was in the melting-pot. Nobody knew when it would end now, still less how. If Schwarzkoppen did not come, Labori's appeal might look uglily like the drowning man clutching at a straw. If he came he would of course declare positively for Dreyfus as he had already done diplomatically; but would he be believed? For this would be evidence "from those," as some of the officers were always saying, "whose interest it is to deceive us." What precisely was the interest of von Münster and von Schwarzkoppen in getting Dreyfus off, they never explained. "It is setting the receiver of stolen goods to catch the thief," they aphorized; but they forgot to mention that the receiver had retired from business, and that neither of the two suspected thieves could ever steal again. Dreyfus acquitted could never be of any use to Germany. But the accusers — well knowing that official foreign testimony alone could irrefutably demonstrate the innocence of Dreyfus—lost no chance of insisting that all

foreign testimony was, as such, suspect, misleading, worse than useless.

But we were spared that difficulty, and spared with it the prolongation of the weary trial. Maître Labori received unofficial news on the 7th that neither of the ex-attachés could come to Rennes, but that both would willingly answer any questions put to them by a rogatory commission. Labori drew up his questions: the last and crucial one was, "Have you ever had any direct or indirect relations with Captain Dreyfus?" The Commissary of the Government had no objection to their being asked. But the Court found it had no competence to order such a commission; the summoning of testimony depended solely on the discretionary power of the President. And Colonel Jouaust firmly declined to summon that of Schwarzkoppen.

Here was another turn of the kaleidoscope. The case which yesterday had seemed inclined to run on till the Day of Judgment was suddenly all over. The meaning of that was plain enough. The judges had made up their minds. True the discretion

was nominally the President's alone; but even if two or three of the judges had been strongly in favour of getting Schwarzkoppen's evidence, Jouaust could hardly have refused. Conviction seemed the only ground of the Council's action: men of their broad intelligence—I am saying exactly what most of us thought at the time—could hardly have been taken in by the simile about the receiver and the thief. Dreyfus was either lost or saved—only which? For my part—I admit it, though you know how wrong I was—I thought it looked uncommonly like salvation. The judges had seen in Colonel Maurel the pitiful consequences of a hasty and unconscientious judgment in such a case: would they risk the same consequences for themselves? Moral courage is not the most plenteous of French virtues: if these seven were going to take the consequences of ignoring such vital testimony on the prisoner's side, they must either have resolved to acquit him anyhow or else be the boldest and the most shameless men in France.

One way or another it was done, and the case swooped to its end. Before we knew,

the last scraps of evidence had been swept up and the Commissary of the Government had begun his speech. As he rose, the officers in the witnesses' seats rose too. The Minister of War had ordered them to leave Rennes as soon as the speeches began. Generals first, colonels, majors, captains, subalterns, the crimson and gold lace streamed out of the hall. There remained nothing military but the judges and their substitutes on the dais, and the peasant boys on guard at the bottom of the hall. The army as politics and faction was gone; the place was left clear to the army as justice and order.

Then spoke up the Commissary of the Government. Mr. Commissary Carrière had up to now been nothing in the trial but an element of humour. He is a retired Major of the age, I think, of sixty-six, and he is a law-student of the University of Rennes. That sums him up fairly well—the conscience that impels him to fit himself for the official position he has retired into, the mediocre head that makes it necessary. This same head of his was the most ex-

traordinary thing in court; the skull was almost exactly of the shape of a horse's. An old, worn, slightly vicious, very willing horse he looked with his flat forehead, beaky nose, sparse grey hair, big grey moustache, and peering eyes hidden by glasses. He had taken hardly any part in the trial — had never asked a single question, I think, of a single witness. He had displayed a laudable desire to facilitate any investigation that was suggested, a pronounced distrust of Labori and a good deal of unconscious humour. When Labori had suggested an adjournment to get Schwarzkoppen's evidence, he said, "I freely consent if it will not take too long. But if it means that we are to begin these debates all over again, then I answer No, no, no!" Another day he said testily, "I think it very hard that while the defence is allowed to speak whenever it likes, I, the Commissary of the Government, am refused a hearing." "Because you always ask to speak when everybody else is speaking," replied Jouaust swiftly, and added to the resultant laughter a discreet smile of his own.

They had sat on court-martials together before; and I am afraid that the one man to whom the Court paid no attention at all was Major Carrière. And it surely was the unkindest stroke of fate that flicked this honest, dull, rather inflated, very conscientious gentleman right into the very middle of the Dreyfus case.

He is endowed with a thin voice, slightly cracked; he speaks slowly, but with prodigious emphasis, and hurls his emphasis impartially on every word, as if all that comes out of his mouth is to be considered equally precious. Therewith he gesticulates most elaborately; if the word does not give time for the gesture he leaves off speaking till it is successfully finished. He looks as if he were performing, very methodically, very conscientiously, a new sort of sword exercise, with which his words are only used to mark time; he finishes almost every sentence straight from the shoulder with a tremendous lunge in tierce.

You would have said from his record that his speech would be ludicrously feeble; but it was not. So far as you can sum up the

evidence of over a hundred and thirty hours in an hour and a half, Commissary Carrière did it fairly well. When he felt that he did not know any part of the subject, or that his case was not very good, he passed it by When he felt the ground firm under him he stamped on it. He avoided, for example, the hydraulic brake of the *bordereau*, where the subject was highly technical and the defence strong, and made his point on covering troops, which the defence had comparatively neglected. On the other hand, he saw that it would be fatal to glide over the crucial phrase about the manœuvres, and insisted strenuously that Dreyfus and his comrades only learned verbally on August 28th, 1894, that they would not go. As for the writing, he made ingenious use of the numerous rough drafts that Dreyfus made of his letters from Devil's Island to argue he was trying to alter his handwriting — why? Thence he passed summarily—still putting his whole soul into every syllable—over the secret papers, on which it cannot be said that he shed much light. When he came to Esterhazy, he was again on surer ground.

He threw out once more the suggestion that he may have been the intermediary between Dreyfus and Schwarzkoppen, but flung every force of his being against the idea that he could be held responsible for the treason disclosed by the secret papers. Thus Major Carrière wrestled to the end of his speech. It was a good end—for him—and once more you saw that no Frenchman can escape being an orator. "I began my study of the case with Colonel Picquart's essays on it in the hope—yes, the hope—of proving Dreyfus innocent. It would have given me happiness; it would have flattered my self-esteem to prove him innocent. My conviction has been gradually transformed by this mass of evidence; my conviction of his guilt has been strengthened. On my soul and conscience, Dreyfus is guilty!"

Thus ended the 7th; on the 8th came Demange. It was known that he would speak all day, and I, for one, looked forward to it with gloom. There had been nothing brilliant, nothing dashing about Maître Demange. He looks exactly what he is—a plain lawyer, who wants to win his cases,

and is quite satisfied when he does. He would stand as the type of lawyer anywhere —fat, clean-shaven, ruddy-gilled, with an expression compounded from the vinegar of jurisprudence and the sweet milk of humanity. Were he an English Q.C., which he might be perfectly, you would pronounce him at once a Bencher of his Inn and a judge of port. He had fought the Dreyfus case, if "fight" is the word, like a lawyer, Labori like a politician—a demagogue or a tribune of the people, whichever you prefer. It was said that neither quite liked the other's methods, though no sign of disloyalty came from either. As a fact, they supplemented each other admirably. When Labori was away, Demange certainly did incline to be sluggish. The evidence which he ignored may have been contemptible to him, but he allowed a mountain of prepossession to rise up in the minds of the judges. With Labori there to force the game Demange was admirable—knowing the case in every line, sticking rigidly to minor points, irritating nobody. You will see the way he conducted his case in one instance. The last day of

the evidence General Mercier came up and in a sneaking way tried to discount Freystaetter's evidence by wholly inapposite and slanderous researches into his past. The Freystaetter scene, you remember, was the most smashing blow, controversially, that Mercier received. But Demange yielded the general his point instantly—at the same time maintaining his own. "No need to insist," he said; "we are here in 1899 to try Dreyfus on the evidence; what happened in 1894 is not in the least to the point." Nor was it.

Demange got up, hitched up his gown, and took a look at the judges with the placidity of a man who knows his business and is just about to do it. And then he began his speech quite quietly. No raising of the voice, no gestures, no flourishes of language — just a plain reasonable man speaking to plain reasonable men. But before he had spoken two sentences you saw that here was a master. Not a great emotional orator—for aught I know, not a great lawyer—but a great pleader, a master of his business, which is to persuade men.

He began by saying he would make no exordium, which at once accredited him to the judges, sated with words and words and words. In five minutes he was making an exordium—so cunningly that they did not know it. It was the old classical trick of attracting your hearers' sympathy at the outset, and Demange did it with supreme skill. A witness had said that whoever believed in the innocence of Dreyfus was an enemy of the army and the country. "If that were so," he said, and his voice was rising, "neither Labori nor I would be here." And then his arm began to move as though despite himself, and his voice began to swell and shake—"When I thought a moment that there might be danger to what I have been taught from childhood to respect, to honour, to love—I, a Frenchman—I, a soldier's son—well, yes, I, too, suffered with your sufferings, and my heart beat in unison with yours."

He was one of the judges from that moment. Not a pleader for the man against whom their natural prejudices revolted, but a plain, honest patriot like themselves, trying

to see whether patriotism could not leave room for justice and mercy. He might henceforth persuade them, and he might not; but, in any case, they would now listen to him. He worked them up a moment with a glance at Devil's Island and then brought them down to a point of law. Here he was a plain man who happened to know the law just informing plain men who might happen not to. Then he had them back to France and the flag, then to the agonies of the banished husband and father. One moment he had them all anxiety to learn, to understand, to appreciate; the next a couple of them were in tears. When he had them well disposed, he entered on a survey of the evidence. Not one word did he say whereby the fiercest partisan against Dreyfus could be offended. He was not there to offend, but to persuade. Now he was severely logical, now slyly sarcastic, now all pity, now all indignation, now all common sense. His voice and manner changed with the subject and the method of treatment; one moment he was sluicing out words sixty miles an hour, the next hanging on every syllable; in

seven hours—four on the 8th, three on the 9th—he was never monotonous for a moment. He never let the judges out of his hand for an instant. They were his raw material, and he worked them, worked them, worked them with the zeal of an apprentice and the knowledge of a master. He was not thinking of Picquart, nor of Esterhazy, nor of the General Staff, nor of France, nor even, as a man, of the worn but hopeful face below him. He was thinking of the odd judge whom he might win over, of his case, and of his client. It was his business to get that client off, and he would do it if it could be done.

When he finished, at eleven or so on Saturday morning, he wrapped a huge muffler round his throat. He had done all that a man could do to save Dreyfus; but was that any reason why he should catch cold and lose his voice?

XIX.

"GUILTY!"

"IN the name of the French people...." The hands of all the officers were at the salute, the rifles of the soldiers at the present. The President was dull-red above his white moustache, and his voice, hardly audible, seemed to come through a channel too small for it. The judges—they had been out deliberating for an hour and a half—stood on either hand quite still.

The audience, standing too, was dead silent. The man in front of me—a man with a flat forehead and a curious bald head, in the shape of a sugar-loaf—was trembling so violently that he had to hold himself up by the bench before him.

"The Council of War of the Tenth District, sitting . . ."—his voice is strangled: you cannot hear. Presently comes something—"foreign Power—war against France—delivering documents . . . *bordereau*."

That was the charge: now it is coming. Shaking hands make funnels of ears; breath catches; hearts catch and stand still. The thin voice pauses and for a moment is clear.

"By five votes to two—guilty . . ."—Ah! It burst from every part of the hall at once, half gasp, half sob—the sound with which men take wounds they half expected. Not a single word did any man articulate. Only that one choking shiver—the voice of souls that could find no words.

The whisper from the stage rustled on and on, but nobody heard or heeded it. There was something about "extenuating circumstances" and "ten years," but nobody seemed to know or care what it was. The six stiff figures were still on either side of the whisper. The hall, black with witnesses and press, blue and white with gendarmes, still stood quite stark and motionless. They were neither glad nor angry, but only dimly aware that it was over, and that yet somehow it was still going on.

"Leave in the greatest calm. . . ." Yes, we discovered that we were leaving, and God knows we were calm. I looked round

at my neighbours; I looked at the detectives; I looked at the faces of the soldiers as I passed; they were all calm, and even looked a little frightened. I turned at the door to look up the hall: Demange and Labori were both in tears, which seemed strange; but the Commissary and the Registrar were still sitting moveless at their accustomed desks. Was it over, after all? Only before the long table of the judges, hiding it, stood shoulder to shoulder a close rank of huge gendarmes. They hid the judges altogether. Somehow that seemed quite orderly and natural too.

Where were the predicted storms of passion—the exultation of the conquerors, the curses of the defeated? If the case had not been too grim for laughing, it was comical. As we went into court that morning, and again when the court resumed in the afternoon, detectives had passed their hands over every man to make sure he carried no arms. Inside the court gendarmes stood along every wall, files of them split up the seated spectators, squads of them blocked up all the doorways. Half the audience who

were not journalists were police in plain clothes. Outside, Rennes was a camp. And here were the fiercest partisans on either side trooping out like sheep—not defying opponents, hardly speaking to friends, not even remembering to light cigarettes. All were stunned. The very men who had anticipated the verdict for weeks—had even named the figures and the judges who were to vote either way—were silent and stupid, as under the shock of something unforeseen and appalling. All were dazed, scared, stunned.

We passed out along the familiar street, through the barriers of infantry, past the long lines of mounted gendarmes and the horse-tail plumes of dragoons. It seemed to be the latter part of the afternoon—of a fine afternoon with rare gusts of dust-storm whirling under the clear sun of September and a tender blue sky. From the multitude of people—dotted over every square, leaning in a mile-long fringe over the railings of the quay, grouped at the door of every shop, choking up the tables of every café—it seemed to be a Saturday afternoon. We knew nothing. We had been in court four

hours in the morning hearing Demange say again and again that it is not enough for justice to prove that an accused person may be guilty; that before he is condemned it should be proved he is guilty. After that we had been out of court three hours wondering —trying to believe that the court would say so too. We had been in court again—two hours, the watch said—trying to talk of something else while the judges were away, starting up at the first bell that spoke of their returning, standing still and gulping ten minutes—was it, or ten years?—till they came in and we heard "In the name of the French people!"

"In the name of the French people!" The first beginning of natural life again was a dull, hot, unreasonable rancour against the French people—against calm Rennes—against the honest troopers at their horses' bridles—the army—the judges—anybody. Reason had whispered for weeks that you must allow for prejudice, for prepossessions honestly and even creditably come by and difficult to shake off, for the delicacies of the judges' positions, for the suspicious

mysteries of the case, for misconceptions of the attitude of the accused. There was every reason why it should be so—and it was so, and we were bitterly angry. The band was playing in the café, I remember, as I passed—the usual band that amuses us every evening; what an outrage!

Rennes was calm. Men were tugging barges up the river, and women were washing clothes—just as they had done yesterday before this portent fell. They were playing cards in the cafés and cheapening bonnets in the shops; I met a couple of priests and they did not even look exultant. It was monstrous. This monstrous wrong was done: a man whom most believe innocent, whom none can prove guilty, was coolly, deliberately, solemnly condemned, and condemned for the second time. And Rennes was calm—my God! calm. Better that they had torn him to pieces with their hands.

While we were beginning to rage, they were reading the sentence to Dreyfus. We remembered that in the morning Labori had handed him a telegram and he had smiled. When you see Dreyfus close his cheek is

faintly ruddy—had been, at least, these last three days or so—and the moustache that is a black death's-head grin at a distance, is warmly brown ; the smile we noticed transmuted his haggard face to winning sweetness. Later, as Demange pleaded, we had seen him with his eyes glued to the faces across the table. Once or twice we had seen him in tears—heard him sob. And just before the judges left—before he went out, the gendarme ever behind him, to wrench his brain a little tighter on the rack of suspense —he had spoken his last word. It came up from his chest thick with tears, choked with anxiety, flat and toneless, yet intense, terrible, almost bestial with jarring hope and despair—the old cry—"Innocence . . . " "my soldier's honour . . . " "five years awful torture . . . " "convinced I shall reach port to-day . . . " "your loyalty and justice." Then he turned, and with a firm step and a clamped, chalk-white face strode out, and we saw him no more.

When the hall was emptied they formed up the guard before the dais and brought him in. The judges were gone. He faced

leftward, towards the Commissary of the Government and the Registrar. The last read out the sentence. "In the name of the French people . . . guilty . . . ten years' imprisonment . . . military degradation." The Commissary told him he had twenty-four hours within which to appeal. He heard them in stockish silence. He uttered not one word. At the end he turned, and with the same firm step, the same clamped and chalk-white face, marched out, and the prison swallowed him up again. "In the name of the French people!"

XX.

FRANCE AFTER DREYFUS.

IN a way the most remarkable feature about the verdict of Rennes was the proportion of the votes. When it had been over a few hours, and numb brains had relaxed to thought again, it struck somebody that on the very first day the very first motion had been carried by five to two. The next and the next and all of them had been carried by five to two. Now Dreyfus was condemned by five to two. The idea—the staggering idea—dropped like a stone into the mind, and spread in widening circles till it filled it with conviction. Every one of the judges had made up his mind before a single word of evidence had been heard. The twenty-seven days, the hundred-and-something witnesses, the baskets of documents, the seas of sweat and tears—they were all utterly wasted. They might just as well—

and if as well, then much better—never have been.

The verdict was, naturally, received with a howl of indignation, and to endeavour to extenuate the stupid prejudice—that, at least, if not cowardly dishonesty—of the five who voted against the evidence is not likely to be popular with civilised readers. Yet it may be said of them in extenuation—if it is any extenuation—that they only did as almost any other five Frenchmen would have done in their place. Frenchmen are hypnotised by the case of Dreyfus, as some people are hypnotised by religion; in its presence they lose all mental power and moral sense.

There is no reason, therefore, to suppose that the majority of the Rennes Court-Martial were consciously dishonest in their verdict. I take it they started with the belief that Dreyfus was guilty, with the desire to have him proved guilty, though not with the intention of finding him guilty, and the trial turned out especially propitious for a conscience of this kind. What ruined Dreyfus's case was the assumption made—probably in good faith in 1894, and made

again in 1899—at the very beginning by all the generals and, we may infer, by five of the judges, that the notes of the *bordereau* were all highly important documents. Picquart and Hartmann saw the importance of this point and laboured to destroy it; but the prejudice of five years was too strong. Granting that these notes were of the first importance, it was easy to show that the information was inaccessible to Esterhazy, and by a process of exclusion among those who could get it the traitor was almost necessarily Dreyfus.

The case against Esterhazy lost by the same assumption exactly what the case against Dreyfus gained. Indeed, the case against Esterhazy was hardly pushed as it should have been. To tell the truth, there was not too much evidence against him produced at Rennes, and I, for one, should have hesitated to condemn him on it. The strongest part of it, excluding the testimony of the Germans, was the handwriting—and here Bertillon's specious pseudo-science was a god-send to the man who wanted to juggle his conscience into voting against

Dreyfus. The confessions had the vice of being inconsistent with each other, and it was easy to argue that Esterhazy was paid to make them; if you respond, as Esterhazy did, that he is living at present in poverty, there is an answer ready enough; what sane corrupter but would make it a condition of his bribe that it should not be exposed by being prematurely enjoyed?

Esterhazy's guilt once ruled out—and I think it was ruled out very early in the trial — Dreyfus's conviction almost certainly followed. The five judges probably, Jouaust almost obviously, reasoned thus: we are not trying Esterhazy; therefore we will not trouble to apply our consciences to his case; now, Esterhazy being set aside, who can the traitor be but Dreyfus? Therefore, unless it is proved materially impossible for Dreyfus to have been the traitor, we conclude that Dreyfus was the traitor. It was all the easier to do this because Labori was the only man who seemed to realise the vital importance of proving Esterhazy guilty; Demange said in so many words that he cared nothing at all about Esterhazy. The end was that it

was not proved materially impossible for Dreyfus to be the traitor. De Fond-Lamothe all but did it with his circular as to the manœuvres—did do it to any reasonable mind in the absence of any evidence that Dreyfus asked to go—but the generals produced a sort of answer which just saw them through. They did, perhaps, just establish that it is not materially impossible for Dreyfus to have betrayed the notes of the *bordereau*. That was all they even pretended to do—"*il a pu*," "he might have," came out of their mouths in answer to two questions out of three—but it was all they needed to do.

The most extraordinary and indefensible step that Colonel Jouaust in particular, and the majority of the judges, took was the refusal to examine von Schwarzkoppen, and the determination to ignore the official statement in the German *Reichsanzeiger* that no German agent had ever had direct or indirect relations with Dreyfus. Of course, this is only another example of the Dreyfus-hypnotism; it seems the judges did after all sincerely believe in the analogy about the receiver and the thief. But the sincerest

belief in the world cannot excuse such wanton wickedness; rather, it makes it worse. For it means that five French officers, officially presumed to be gentlemen, have been so worked on by the Dreyfus case and the passions it has engendered, that they have quite forgotten what a gentleman's word of honour is. They do not believe Schwarzkoppen nor Münster—no, nor yet Wilhelm II. —on their words of honour. The only inference is that in a like case they would not expect to be believed on their own.

The finding of extenuating circumstances at first sight was quite fatal to the judges' good faith: what circumstances could extenuate the guilt of a French officer who betrayed the most vital secrets of France? But the truth appears to be that extenuating circumstances are brought in in France when a considerable minority is for acquittal; and in this case one more judge for Dreyfus would have meant a verdict amounting to not proven. The two judges, therefore, who voted for acquittal have the satisfaction of knowing that even if the verdict stands, they have at least won for Dreyfus remission

of some part of his destined torments. The names of those two courageous, honourable and clear-minded men I do not know. In a country like France, where to be known would only do them harm, I should not attempt to find out; but they probably will be known before this is published, and they are not the least of the heroes of the Dreyfus case.*

I have said the best I can say for the Rennes judges, because it is generally safer to say the best than the worst; yet the best is very bad. For France I am not sure but the hypothesis of their honest inability to weigh evidence about Dreyfus is not more ominous than dishonest and cowardly submission to the wishes of generals. It means

* All published accounts agree that Captain Beauvais—who publicly shook hands with Demange after the announcement of the verdict—was one; the other is variously given as Major de Bréon, Major Merle, and Captain Parfait. Of the first the *Figaro* had a pretty story that he was seen in a church the night before in long and urgent prayer; therefore, for the credit of the Church in France, you would be glad if it were he. Major Merle shed tears during Demange's speech; on the strength of that it was said that he had been undecided till the last moment, was won by Demange, but was re-won by his superiors in the jury-room, and gave in on condition of the finding of extenuating circumstances.

that France has forgotten what justice is. Alfred Dreyfus has inflicted on her this awful retribution for his wrongs. Nothing that has been suffered by him—and this is the most tremendous irony of the whole tragedy—has gone unavenged. For four years a prisoner on a feverish island off the coast of Guiana, Dreyfus has been shaping the destinies of France. He has altered the laws, set up and thrown down governments, made and unmade men, knit close friendships, ripped asunder the dearest ties of blood. At last, like a pursuing fury, he seems about to drive the France that murdered him into frenzied self-destruction. And, to pile irony on irony, of Alfred Dreyfus himself the world, even France, would never have heard a word, had he lived to be a hundred, but for mere chance. The jealousy of a fellow, the offence of a moment, the accident of his creed—anything—nothing—has turned him from an utterly obscure captain of artillery into the most famous name in the world.

The whole affair, the whole importance and notoriety of Dreyfus, was accidental and

artificial. Since he has left the Devil's Island he has agitated France far less than while he was there. Indeed, when, in 1895, M. Dupuy and General Mercier took the trouble to pass a special law to relegate Dreyfus to the Devil's Island, they did the worst day's work of their lives. Had he been sent in the natural course to New Caledonia, it is possible that he might be there still, forgotten. "Possible," I say, because he is a Jew, and Jews do not readily forget or cast off their own people; had he been a Gentile he had almost certainly been forgotten in New Caledonia.

But the chance of combining ferocity with theatrical display was too much for a French Ministry. The public degradation of Dreyfus, with its blended accompaniments of imposing ceremonial and heartrending torture, was, after all, not too severe for the crime of which all Frenchmen then honestly believed him guilty. But the added cruelty of making a special law for him, sending him to a special place of banishment, tormenting him with every special penalty or deprivation that could make life a hell—that recoiled on

its authors. The stage-management was too good, the situation was too dramatic, to be forgotten. Dreyfus on his own island—the very name of Devil's Island was a melodrama in itself—sitting in the sun within his palisade, in irons, asking his guards for news and met always with dead silence, informed—as we now know—that his wife had borne a child two years after he last saw her: who could ever get the picture of such a purgatory out of his head? Under the last blow a Frenchman would have killed himself; but the Alsatian Jew was made of stiffer fibre. He lived on, and his countrymen, with the spectacle of that awful agony ever before their eyes, first exulted, then came to doubt, insisted, disputed, reviled, lied, forged, fought, forgot friendship, kinship, party, religion, country — everything except the silent man in irons under the sun of Devil's Island.

But when he was brought back—when he was once more Alfred Dreyfus, captain of artillery, in the cell of the military prison at Rennes, charged with having communicated to a foreign Power documents concerning the

national defence, tried on that charge before a court-martial of his peers—then France was no longer haunted by him. The avenging ghost was momentarily laid. Calm overspread the land. Many men had openly declared that Dreyfus ran a chance of being shot between his point of debarkation and the prison of Rennes; he was not even hissed. There has not been a single demonstration outside his prison worthy of ten lines in a newspaper. And—lest you should put down that fact to the congenital torpor of Rennes—in the excitable south, in the great military centres, in the manufacturing centres, in volcanic Paris itself, Dreyfus has not been the occasion of a single disturbance of any significance since he was landed in France.

Language remained violent enough and vile enough, it is true; such a furious habit of blackguarding opponents as has grown up with the Dreyfus case in France could hardly be stilled in a day. But everybody felt more at ease. From the half-indifferent, wholly perplexed mass of the people, when Dreyfus returned, went up a great "Ouf!" of relief. Now at last, said they, we shall

have the truth, we shall have finality in this wretched affair, thereafter we shall have peace. And the other day, when it was over and he was condemned again, the "Ouf!" went up out of even fuller lungs. The verdict delighted them. There was to be no more haunting Devil's Island, and at the same time the honour of the army was saved. The vast majority of the people of France rejoiced as after a great victory; and they looked forward more than ever with confidence to peace and harmony in France again.

* * * *

It might re-enforce that hope to consider how wholly irrelevant to all great material issues the Dreyfus case has been. At the first glance it seems that France has chosen to lose her head over a matter which she might just as well have let alone, which is over now, and has left her where she was before. Whether Dreyfus or Esterhazy betrayed documents, or both, or neither, it is certain that no other French officer will be tempted to do the same for years enough to come. Even if wrong has been done—if the innocent has been punished and the

guilty has gone free, after all, it is only one man. And it is expedient that one man should suffer for the whole people.

So argued, and would argue again, more than half of France. And just because they argue thus, they are utterly and fatally wrong. It may be expedient to sacrifice one man for a country—when the detection of sacrifice and of expediency is left to others. But when the country argues thus itself, when it sacrifices the innocent one with its eyes open, then the sacrifice is not expedient, but ruinous. It is this truth that Picquart saw and proclaimed three years ago. When Dreyfus was first condemned, it is probable that everybody concerned, even Du Paty de Clam, who examined him, and Mercier, who procured his conviction, honestly believed him guilty. But from the moment the people suspected his innocence and still let him suffer—from that moment began the convulsion, the dissensions, the moral putrefaction, and all the rest of the discovered distempers of France.

It was known in widening circles, first to a few soldiers, then to journalists and poli-

ticians, then to everybody who cared to be convinced to-day—to everybody with ears to hear—that Dreyfus, if not innocent, had not yet been proved guilty. In the face of that knowledge France still howls, "Let him suffer!" It is at once the grimmest and grotesquest spectacle in history—a whole nation, knowing that justice has not been done, keenly excited about the question, and yet not caring a sou whether justice is done or not. What matter, cries France, whether he is justly condemned or not? Shoot him rather than discredit the army. And even of the minority—of the Dreyfusards that exclaim against his martyrdom and prepare to show that the verdict of Rennes has brought not peace but a sword—who shall say how few care for doing justice to a man who is innocent, and how many give tongue merely because they hate the army, or the Roman Church, or Christianity, or France herself? All but the whole nation—the nation which professes itself the most civilised in the world—publicly proclaims that it cares nothing for the first essential of civic morality. Partly

it is the petulance of a spoiled child which will not see the patent truth, partly the illogical logic of French intelligence which will commit any insanity that is recommended in the form of a syllogism, partly the sheer indifference of a brute that knows neither right nor wrong.

But why try to analyse a phenomenon so despicable? One thing is certain, common justice is the first and most indispensable condition of a free country's existence. It is absurd to think that any cause which has led to so deliberate a jettison of justice from the national cargo can be anything but most portentous and most disastrous to the nation.

From henceforth every reflecting Frenchman knows that he may be accused of any crime, condemned on evidence he has never heard of, banished, tormented in body and mind, and that hardly a soul among his countrymen will care whether he is getting justice or injustice. They happened to take sides about Dreyfus; he may have no such luck. Dreyfus, for the rights of whose case friends and foes cared nothing, happened to

be a convenient stick for anti-Semites and anti-militarists to thump the other side with; he may not. Reasoning thus, will the reflective Frenchman cultivate independence of thought, civic courage, political honesty? Not he. He will make it his business in life to cultivate a safe obscurity, and shout, if shout he must, always with the largest crowd.

The results of such a lesson upon the public life of a nation are not easy to detect at once and in glaring cases; but you may be very sure they are there, and in the long run they will show themselves. The French citizen was fearful of unpopularity before; he will not be bolder now. The punishment of those who have suffered in Dreyfus's cause will not be lost on him. The timidity of a Casimir-Perier, of the President of the Republic who suspected the truth and dared not discover it, will be emulated by lesser men. Cowardice will become a principle of public life.

In one respect alone can France claim pity—that she became bankrupt in justice through honouring too large a draft of her

darling child, the army. The army is the adored of France. A few of the younger men, still smarting from the petty brutalities of sergeants who delight to bully boys of a better class than their own, hate it bitterly; but to France as a whole her army is her dearest treasure. In a conscriptive country the sight of troops in the street is as familiar as that of policemen in London. In Germany or Austria a regiment will march past with drum and colours and hardly a head turns to follow it. But in France the daily passage of the regiment empties every shop, and leaves the whole street tingling with pride and enthusiasm and love. It does not diminish this affection that the last time the army took the field it was beaten and crumpled up, shot down by battalions and carried into captivity by brigades. Quite the reverse. France feels a sort of yearning to comfort her army as a mother might comfort an unsuccessful son. And the hope of revenge for that humiliation, on which she has lived for near a generation, rests in the army alone. The army—as they have said so often—the army is France. Everybody

has served in it; everybody depends on it. The army is France.

Only that unlucky gift of bad logic led France astray again. The army being France, they argue, the honour of the army is the honour of France. Thence they push on to the facile fallacy. The honour of the heads of the army is the honour of the army, and therefore of France. Honour, in that sense, apparently means reputation for honour, which comes, when you work it out, to the dictum that a general can do no wrong—or at least if he does, nobody may say so.

When Esterhazy refused at the Zola trial to answer questions relative to his connection with the German military attaché, the judge, M. Delegorgue, protected him. "There is something," said he, "more important than a court of justice—the honour and security of the country." "I gather," tartly replied Zola's counsel, "that the honour of the country allows an officer to do such things, but does not allow them to be spoken of."

Precisely. It came, of course, in practice to the divine right of generals. If a general's

act was questioned, he responded that the interests of the national defence demanded it, and said no more. France for the most part is quite satisfied. She has invented a new kind of government — Cæsarism without a Cæsar.

No general is able or resolute enough to impose his authority on his fellows. Had any recent Minister of War desired to make himself dictator or bring in a Pretender, such was the all-accepting meekness of the country that he could have done it. None dared, and none of the Pretenders thought the sceptre worth picking up out of the gutter. The result was that nobody knew or knows who is ruling France at any given moment, or, indeed, knows anything at all—except that, whoever is ruling, it certainly is not the President nor the Ministry of the Republic. Summarily the Republic, during the three years of the Dreyfus agitation, has abdicated.

There is nothing surprising in that; the corruption and cowardice of Ministers, Senators, and Deputies had been amply demonstrated by the scandal of Panama. The

Dreyfus affair only overthrew what was already tottering.

But the effects of government by generals are new and dismal. It was bad enough that they should arrogate power to override every authority in the State; yet to usurp is a generous crime, and to permit the usurpation of the army was in France a generous weakness. The dismal portent is the utter incapacity which the generals display. The Dreyfus case was their own game, and they had all the cards; but for the life of them they could not play a single one correctly. Wherever it was possible to bungle or vacillate, they bungled and vacillated.

They first admitted in the press that Dreyfus was condemned on secret documents —that is, illegally—and then denied it in the Chamber. They first contended that Dreyfus wrote the incriminating *bordereau* because it was like his natural handwriting, then that he forged it, because it was more like Esterhazy's. They tried to entrap Picquart by bogus cryptograms that would have been childish in a comic opera. They

filled the air with asseverations of their loyalty to the Republic while they were openly violating its fundamental principles. They declared that for the paramount honour of the country they would prefer a revolution to the revision of the Dreyfus case; then, when it came to the point, submitted in tame silence to the Cour de Cassation and General de Galliffet's orders. They fought the Rennes case with determination and skill; but once more acknowledged their inferiority to De Galliffet by leaving the court—at his command, not the law's—when the speeches began. Worst of all has been their behaviour, where at least you might have expected dignity and spirit, in regard to foreign Powers. They withdrew from Fashoda and renounced Egypt for ever rather than fight Great Britain, although Marchand's appearance on the Nile was the hoped-for climax of the deliberate policy of years. One day they inspired impertinent fables about the Kaiser's communications with Dreyfus; the next they sheepishly denied them on the threats of his ambassador. Now they have

insulted Germany again; but everybody knows they will apologize if she bids them. The great international result of three years of government by generals is that France has virtually showed herself unfit for war by sea or land—afraid of England, terrified by Germany, the vassal of Russia—all but a second-rate Power.

"What is to become of your army in the day of danger?" cried General de Pellieux at the trial of Zola. "What would you have your unhappy soldiers do, led under fire by officers whom others have striven to discredit in their eyes? . . . It is to a mere butchery they are leading your sons." It is—or would be, if France were mad enough to fight. There would be as ruinous a collapse as in 1870. Only that would not be the work of "others," but of the leaders of the army itself. They are indeed discredited—by their own folly. Few people yet believe in their honesty, and now none in their capacity. Every man in France who knows anything of the last three years' history, in his heart distrusts his beloved army utterly. That is the sum of what the

generals, with everything in their favour, have been able to do for France, for the army, and for themselves.

The degradation of politics and of the army has been equalled by that of the press. France has never had a journal—unless we except the *Temps* and the present incarnation of the *Matin*—which an Anglo-Saxon public would call a newspaper; but then she does not want one. She has had journals which supply what she wants—well-considered and elegantly written essays on the subjects of the day. Such she still finds in organs like the *Figaro* and the *Journal des Débats*; but in the lower ranks of the press the fatal influence of the Dreyfus case has told vilely. American papers appear to an Englishman free-spoken in their attacks on opponents, but the cheapest rag in New York would blush for the recklessness, gullibility and foulness of the baser French press. Restraints of good taste and decency are quite obsolete. You call your political opponent "a prodigy of corruption both in public and in private life, with thirty years of lies, debauchery, bribery, defamation and calumny behind him."

The Prime Minister, if you dislike his policy, you describe as "only half cleansed of the murder of Carnot, the butcher of Madagascar, Hanotaux's accomplice in the extermination of the Armenians." You never speak of General de Galliffet by name, but as "the assassin of May"; they will know whom you mean. M. Cavaignac being personally irreproachable, it is well to hark back to his ancestors, and call him the heir of two generations of murderers. Never say your opponent published his opinions, say that he vomited them. You can hardly go wrong in describing anything you dislike as *ordure.*

With foul language go intimidation, obtuseness, spiritlessness. During the trial of Zola many newspapers headed their issues for days with the names and addresses of the jurors, accompanied by suitable instigations to violence. During the Rennes Court-Martial on Dreyfus an ingenious little paper in Rennes ran a serial, giving the story of an Alsatian spy in 1870, named Deutschfus, who seduced an honest girl, and then, returning as an Uhlan, shot

her and kidnapped her child. The credulity of such newspapers equals their violence, and they readily gulp down the wildest stories and clumsiest forgeries. And when an occasion comes, like the Fashoda crisis, in which a strong lead might fitly have been given to the nation, nothing was forthcoming except alternate bluster and puling. With one breath they thundered out what things they would do if they could; with the next they wailed for compassion because they could not do them. They inquired into the possible cause of the national decadence quite openly, and wound up with "Poor France!"

Poor France indeed! Her Government paralytic, her army cankered, her press putrid—what remains to her? The Church? The Church remains, but the influence of the Catholic leaders and the Catholic clergy in the cause of anti-Semitism has discredited her among all fair-minded men. The law? The law has been broken and mended to order for the advantage or the disadvantage of individuals; and while the Cour de Cassation has done its duty most honourably under difficult circumstances, lesser magis-

trates have been found to surrender the law to partisanship or to fear. M. Quesnay de Beaurepaire was one of the highest judges in France, and his silly spitefulness has made him the laughing-stock of the world.

Then what remains? Why, Rennes! The storm of party bitterness, folly, weakness, knavery has swept over from Paris into its own Lycée; yet Rennes basks unmoved under its sun. Walk down the drowsy streets. Look at the Breton people — the shopkeepers, the blue blouses, the little lace caps over women's faces bronzed with field-work. There are yet people in France who are courteous and kindly, simple and frugal and brave, who earn their living, and love their kin, and do what the priest tells them, and are ready to die for France. There are millions more of them all over the provinces. Paris looks down upon them, and the whole world outside hardly knows of them, but they are the strength of France. It is theirs to work while Paris talks, to earn what Paris squanders, to heal when Paris wounds.

The Dreyfus case is the deepest cut which Paris has scored on the nation's body since

1870, perhaps since 1789. But it has not reached the vitals, and the provinces may heal it as they have done again and again before. The recuperative power of France has ever amazed the world, merely because the world has thought that France spelled only Paris. The provinces do nothing else but recuperate.

Only that process, especially with a dwindling population, cannot go on for ever. There will come in the end a day—and sooner, perhaps, than we think—when Paris will have sucked the nation dry, and the provinces will have no more to give. A nation cannot go on when the bottom is rotten, but neither can it live without a top. And there will soon be no top; Paris rots it as soon as it begins to flower. Presently there will be nothing left but Paris and peasants. France will still be France, but no longer a great Power, having nobody left to lead her.

And in some ways the demand which these three years of factious frenzy have made on France is more exhausting than any of those from which she has recovered. In 1815 and 1871 it was comparatively easy for a united

people to revive after foreign war. After the revolution, when the whole fabric of society was swept away, there was a great faith wherewith to build up everything anew; and after that the miracle of Napoleon. In 1899, after the Dreyfus case, the great institutions of France still stand; but everybody knows them to be undermined. There is no faith; and because there is no faith there will be no miracle.

Sans nouvelles m'indiquant que vous
diviez me voir, je vous adresse cependant
Monsieur quelques renseignements intéressants
1° une note sur le frein hydraulique
du 120 et la manière dont il est conduit
cette pièce
2° une note sur les troupes de couverture.
(quelques modifications seront apportées par
le nouveau plan).
3° une note sur une modification aux
formations de l'artillerie.
4° une note relative à Madagascar.
5° le projet de manuel de tir de
l'artillerie de campagne (16 mars 1894.)

Ce dernier document est extrêmement
difficile à se procurer et je ne puis
l'avoir à ma disposition que très peu
de jours. Le ministère de la guerre
en a envoyé un nombre fixe dans
les corps et ces corps en sont responsables.

FACSIMILE OF THE BORDEREAU.

APPENDIX.

INTRODUCTORY.

To help the reader to a thorough appreciation and understanding of the trial at Rennes, there have been selected from the mass of reports, depositions and incidents which make of the Affaire Dreyfus the most confusing and complicated case on record, a few significant facts round which all the others can be grouped, and which are the vital and suggestive facts at the bottom of the case. They are presented with the explanatory and critical remarks of the Judges of the Court of Cassation, as recorded in the official reports.

Of the many people who have investigated the case, none had such admirable qualifications as the members of the highest tribunal of justice of France, who brought to this

arduous work not only their superior professional equipment, but also an attitude absolutely unbiassed and unprejudiced. As supreme guardians of justice, as patriotic Frenchmen, they never for a moment entertained the barbarous notion that the honour of the French army made the punishment of an innocent man a necessity.

SYNOPSIS OF THE DREYFUS CASE.

1894.

End of Sept.—The *bordereau* is brought to the Bureau of Information (the Intelligence Department of the French War Office which deals with all matters pertaining to espionage).

Oct. 13.—Bertillon designates Dreyfus as author of the *bordereau*. (Another expert, Gobert, had refused to identify the two handwritings.)

Oct. 15.—Du Paty de Clam's examination of Dreyfus, and arrest of the latter at close of the famous dictation scene. Dreyfus conducted by Henry to the Cherche-Midi prison, and given in charge of Forzinetti, governor of the prison.

Nov.—Investigation by the Bureau of Information into the life, etc., of Dreyfus.

Dec. 3.—Act of accusation drawn up by D'Ormescheville.

Dec. 19.—Dreyfus trial begins before the First Court-Martial of Paris. As soon as the witnesses had been called over, the Commissary of the Government demanded that the case be heard *in camerâ*. Maître Demange, counsel for the accused, opposed, and asked to be allowed to argue the point, "seeing that the unique piece of evidence——" He could not even finish his sentence; the President interrupted him, and the Commissary of the Government said to him that there were other interests at stake than those merely of the accusation and defence. The case was therefore heard *in camerâ*.

Dec. 22.—Dreyfus is unanimously condemned to deportation and perpetual imprisonment in a fortified place.

1895.

Jan. 4.—Public degradation of Dreyfus in the courtyard of the École Militaire.

Feb. 9.—The Chamber of Deputies passes a special law deporting Dreyfus to French Guiana, and he is conducted to La Rochelle, the Ile de Ré, and thence to the Ile du Diable.

1896.

May.—Picquart, appointed Chief of the Intelligence Bureau, discovers the *petit bleu*, a communication written by Schwarzkoppen, the German Military Attaché, and addressed to Esterhazy. Later, after serious investigations, Picquart decides on the guilt of Esterhazy, and the consequent innocence of Dreyfus.

July.—Picquart reports his discoveries to Gen. de Boisdeffre.

Sept.—Picquart reports his discoveries to Gen. Gonse, and divulges the use of a secret document at the trial.

Sept. 14.—The *Eclair* publishes the secret document "*Ce canaille de D——.*" (printing it *Dreyfus* instead of *D——.*)

Oct.—Publication of Bernard Lazare's first brochure "The Truth about the Dreyfus Affair."

Nov. 10.—Publication in the *Matin* of a facsimile of the *bordereau*.

Nov. 16.—Picquart sent away from Paris on a mission to Tunis, and succeeded by Henry.

Nov. 18.—Castelin's interpellation in the Chamber of Deputies on the publication of the secret documents in the newspapers.

End of Nov.—De Castro, a banker, recognises Esterhazy's handwriting in the facsimile of the *bordereau* published by the *Matin*, and informs the Dreyfus family of the fact.

1897.

Jan.—Picquart reaches Tunis.

June.—Beginning of the open warfare against Picquart by Henry. The former consults his friend Leblois, a lawyer. Leblois secures the support of Scheurer-Kestner, Vice-President of the Senate, who having for four months past investigated the affair at the request of Bernard Lazare, had become convinced of the innocence of Dreyfus.

July.—Scheurer-Kestner declares publicly that he is convinced of the innocence of Dreyfus.

Sept. 28.—M. Martini, Comptroller of the Army and friend of General Billot, War Minister, asks of Dreyfus' father-in-law, M. Hadamard, what elements he has gathered to prove the innocence of Dreyfus.

Oct. 16.—Last known interview between Esterhazy and Schwarzkoppen.

Oct. 24.—Esterhazy writes a threatening letter to M. Hadamard.

Oct. 30.—Interview between Scheurer-Kestner and Billot, the Minister of War.

Nov. 10.—Picquart, in Tunis, receives false telegrams signed "Blanche" and "Speranza."

Nov. 14.—The "Veiled Lady" presents Esterhazy with a document from the secret *dossier* of the Dreyfus trial.

Nov. 15.—Esterhazy is denounced by Mathieu Dreyfus as the author of the *bordereau*, and Esterhazy demands an investigation.

Nov. 18.—Forzinetti is cashiered for declaring to Rochefort that Dreyfus is innocent.

Commandant Pauffin Saint-Morel punished with thirty days *consigne* for having brought to Rochefort the "flag of the General Staff."

Nov. 22.—Picquart's rooms are searched in his absence by Henry on Gen. de Pellieux's order.

The friends of Dreyfus force the Minister of War to recall Picquart from Tunis, that he may be heard at the proceedings opened against Esterhazy.

Nov. 27.—Picquart appears before Gen. de Pellieux, who is making a preliminary investigation against Esterhazy.

Nov. 28.—The *Figaro* publishes Esterhazy's letters to Mme. de Boulancy, the famous *Ublan* letter among them.

Dec. 4.—Interpellation in the Chamber of Deputies on the Dreyfus case. Gen. Billot declares Dreyfus was "justly and legally condemned."

Dec. 7.—The *bordereau* is included in the Esterhazy *dossier* to be examined by the Court-Martial.

Dec. 15 *and* 20.—The false documents of Lemercier-Picard are offered to M. Reinach, who refuses them, and are sold to Rochefort, who published them as coming from the "department of the *Syndicate of treason* devoted to making up false documents."

1898.

Jan. 3.—Esterhazy brought before the Court-Martial.

Jan. 8.—Colonel Picquart testifies to the two false documents signed "Speranza" and "Blanche," addressed to him while he was in Tunis.

Jan. 10.—The Esterhazy Court-Martial shows its animosity against Colonel Picquart.

Esterhazy is exonerated by the Ravary report.

General de Luxer, presiding officer, accepts as perfectly good all the explanations of the accused.

Jan. 11.—Acquittal of Esterhazy, who leaves the prison on the arm of Mdlle. Pays, saluted by cries of "Long live the Army! Down with the Jews!"

Jan. 13.—Letter from Emile Zola to the President of the République, published by the *Aurore* under the title of "*J'accuse.*"

Colonel Picquart is arrested and then sent to the fortress of Mont Valérien.

Jan. 17.—Letters protesting against the illegality of the Dreyfus judgment are published in great numbers.

Jan. 18.—The Minister of War brings suit against Zola and the *Aurore*.

Jan. 20.—Zola and Perreux, manager of the *Aurore*, are summoned. Fifteen lines only in an article of eight columns are mentioned in the summons.

Jan. 22.—Interpellation by M. Cavaignac in the Chamber of Deputies. M. Méline, the Prime Minister, says, "We have thought best not to bring before a jury the honour of the chiefs of the army."

Jan.—Declaration by M. de Bulow in the Reichstag: "BETWEEN EX-CAPTAIN DREYFUS AND NO MATTER WHICH GERMAN AGENTS, THERE HAVE NEVER EXISTED ANY RELATIONS OF ANY SORT."

In the Chamber of Deputies M. Jaurès puts this question to M. Méline: "Yes or no; was there a document communicated to the Court-Martial without the knowledge of the accused?" M. Méline refuses to reply.

Feb. 7.—Zola is brought before the Cour d'Assises. The officers are absent. Gen. Billot, in whose name the complaint was made, is not there.

Feb. 9.—Judgment of the Court, commanding the military witnesses to come to the trial.

Feb. 10.—M. Delegorgue, President of the Court, declares: "There is no such thing as a Dreyfus affair." He refuses to put the questions of the defence to the witnesses. However, Gen. Mercier does not dare to deny that a secret document was shown to the judges of Dreyfus.

Feb. 12.—Deposition of Col. Picquart.

Deposition of M. Jaurès, who affirms that a secret document was shown to the judges of Dreyfus. M. Demange declares that so far as the trial was concerned, he knew of nothing but the *bordereau*, but a colleague told him that he had heard from a judge of the Court-Martial that a secret document had been shown to the judges of Dreyfus in the judges' room.

M. Bertillon is heard, and his system considered.

Feb. 14—Three French experts, Paul Meyer, director, Auguste Molinier, and Emile Molinier, professors at the Ecole des Chartres, declare that the *bordereau* is the work of Esterhazy. The fourth expert, Louis Havet, professor at the Sorbonne, comes to the same conclusion.

Feb. 17.—General de Pellieux speaks of the secret document (the forged Henry document.)

Feb. 18.—Colonel Picquart declares that that secret document is a forgery. Examination of Esterhazy. He is silent before the accusations brought by Maître Albert Clemenceau, one of the counsel for the defence.

Feb. 20, 22, 23.—Maître Labori pleads for Zola, Maître Clemenceau pleads for the *Aurore*.

Feb. 23.—Condemnation of Zola (one year in prison and 3000 francs fine).

Feb. 25.—MM. Grimaux, Leblois, Picquart and Chapelin are cashiered for having expressed doubts of the guilt of Dreyfus.

End of Feb.—The greater part of the European Press sides with Zola.

March 5.—Death of Lemercier-Picard, spy and forger. His identity is concealed for three days by the police.

March 30.—Appeal of Zola and of the *Aurore*.

April 1.—Gen. Billot declares to M. Mazeau, President of the Court of Cassation, that he will not be responsible for troubles in the street if the Zola verdict is revised.

April 2.—The Zola verdict is annulled.

The Court-Martial not having brought a complaint against Zola and the *Aurore*, M. Méline, interpellated by M. Habert, promises to prosecute again and at once.

April 7.—Letter to the *Siècle*, signed "*Diplomate*," accuses Esterhazy of having been in the employ of Col. Schwarzkoppen. Esterhazy does not prosecute the *Siècle*.

April 8.—The Court-Martial brings complaint against Zola and the *Aurore*. In the *Siècle* is published the deposition of M. Casella, declaring that Esterhazy is the author of the *bordereau*, and quoting MM. Panizzardi and Schwarzkoppen as his authorities.

April 11.—Zola and the *Aurore* are re-summoned. It is now a question of but *three* lines in the same article of *eight* columns.

April 12 & 15.—Esterhazy does not prosecute either the *Siècle* or the newspapers which reprinted the accusation of M. Casella.

May 15.—It is said that the General Staff possess a photograph of Col. Picquart in conversation with Col. Schwarzkoppen. The *Jour* affirms the existence of this photograph, but being summoned to produce it, the photograph is not to be found.

May 23.—Zola prosecuted at Versailles.

The theory of the incompetency of the Court is rejected.

May 23.—Bands of loafers follow and hoot Zola and Picquart.

Esterhazy surrounded with officers and journalists, who are grasping his hands, declares that he is come for the purpose of killing Picquart.

The letters to Madame de Boulancy, after legal investigation, are declared to be authentic.

June 14.—Downfall of the Méline Ministry.

June 16.—Rejection of Zola's appeal.

June 18 & 22.—Ministerial crisis caused by the Dreyfus affair.

June 24.—Mr. Conybeare, Professor at the University of Oxford, writes M. Reinach: "Colonel de Schwarzkoppen will not

deny that he paid 2000 francs monthly to his habitual informer, Esterhazy."

Esterhazy does not prosecute the newspapers which print the accusation of Professor Conybeare.

June 27.—M. Charles Dupuy, Prime Minister, declares that the report of M. Lebrun-Renault dates from 1897 and not from 1894, the time when it should have been made.

June 28.—M. Brisson accepts M. Cavaignac as Minister of War, imposed by the *Libre Parole* and the *Intransigeant*, the anti-Dreyfusist newspapers.

M. Cavaignac is selected by these journals because of his attitude in the Dreyfus affair.

July 5.—The *Aurore* publishes a letter from Esterhazy containing the expression of the *bordereau*, "I am about to leave for the manœuvres." This letter proves: First, that, contrary to what he says, Esterhazy went to the manœuvres in 1894; and second, that the wording of this phrase was usual with the Major.

July 8.—Speech of M. Cavaignac at the Chamber. He reads the forged Henry document, and bases his conviction of Dreyfus's guilt largely upon it.

July 9.—Letter from Colonel Picquart to M. Brisson offering to prove to him that the document read by Cavaignac at the Chamber is a forged document.

July 13.—Colonel Picquart is arrested and prosecuted for the facts brought forward against him in February.

Arrest of Esterhazy and Mdlle. Pays, accused of fabricating the false documents "Speranza" and "Blanche."

July 18.—New trial of Zola at Versailles.

Condemnation by default of Zola and Perreux, one year in prison and 3000 francs fine.

Maître Ployer, counsel for the prosecution, says that "Zola in spite of a freedom of defence without parallel in judicial annals, did not attempt even to demonstrate his innocence"!

July 19.—Departure of Zola from France.

July 23.—Complaint of Colonel Picquart against Colonel Du Paty de Clam.

Zola is stricken from the rolls of the Legion of Honour.

July 28.—The Chamber of Correctional Appeal condemns

Zola and Perreux, manager of the *Aurore*, to one month in prison and 3000 francs fine for libel against the experts Couard, Belhomme, and Varinard, whom he accuses in his letter of lying or imbecility. Each of the experts obtains 5000 francs damages.

July 30.—M. Bertulus declares Colonel Du Paty de Clam, Esterhazy, and Mdlle. Pays authors and accomplices in the matter of the false documents "Blanche" and "Speranza."

Aug. 6.—The Chambre d'Accusation saves Du Paty de Clam by declaring M. Bertulus has no right to investigate in the matter of the forged Du Paty de Clam and Esterhazy documents.

Aug. 13.—Esterhazy is set at liberty.

Aug. 26.—Colonel Picquart and M. Leblois are sent before the police court.

Aug. 30.—Arrest of Colonel Henry, who acknowledges being the forger of the document Cavaignac quoted in his speech of July 8.

Aug. 31.—Resignation of General de Boisdeffre.
Suicide of Colonel Henry.

Sept. 1.—The Cour de Cassation declares that the Chambre d'Accusation has exonerated Colonel Du Paty de Clam by refusing to apply the existing law.

Sept. 3.—Resignation of M. Cavaignac.

Sept. 5.—Letter from Madame Dreyfus to the Minister of Justice, demanding the revision of the judgment against Dreyfus.

Sept. 6.—General Zurlinden assumes the portfolio of war.

Sept. 13.—Colonel Du Paty de Clam is placed on the retired list for his part in the affair Esterhazy.

Nov. 17.—Revision is practically decided upon.

Nov. 20.—M. Paul Bernard, President, informs Maître Labori that the 8th Chamber will adjourn the Leblois-Picquart trial, and will release Colonel Picquart provisionally.

Nov. 21.—The Leblois-Picquart trial is postponed until after the Revision. The Military Governor of Paris removes Colonel Picquart from the civil prison of La Sauté and places him secretly in the military prison of the Cherche-Midi.

Nov. 25.—General Chanoine, Minister of War, resigns.

Nov. 26.—The Counsel of Ministers refers to the Cour de Cassation the question of the legality of a revision of the Dreyfus case.

Nov. 28.—The Cour de Cassation begins the work of revision.

Nov.—Dreyfus is informed of the pending revision just one year after his brother's denunciation of Esterhazy.

December.—The Criminal Chamber of the Cour de Cassation orders the adjournment of the Picquart trial; examines the secret *dossier* brought by Captain Cuignet on behalf of the Minister of War, hears the depositions of MM. Lebrun-Renault, Casimir-Perier, etc.

1899.

January.—M. Quesnay de Beaurepaire, President of the Civil Chamber of the Cour de Cassation, resigns, and is replaced by Conseiller Ballot-Beaupré.

Jan. 27.—Prosecution of M. Joseph Reinach by Madame Henry for defamation of her husband's memory.

Feb.—M. Renault-Molière, Recorder of the Commission of Procedure in the matter of the revision in the Criminal Chamber, gives a favourable report.

The Criminal Chamber, after having heard further evidence, orders, through M. Loew, its President, the closing of the preliminary inquest for a revision of the Dreyfus case.

The Senate discusses a law for taking the case out of the hands of the Criminal Chamber.

March.—The Senate decides that all Chambers of the Cour de Cassation are to unite and pronounce upon the demand for revision.

M. Ballot-Beaupré is designated as Recorder.

The full bench of Cour de Cassation takes up the investigation of the secret *dossier.*

April.—The *Figaro* publishes all the reports of the investigation of the Cour de Cassation, and being prosecuted is condemned to 500 francs fine.

The Court hears the depositions of Capt. Chamoin and M. Paléologue, and of MM. Lepine, Freystaetter, Bertillon, Gonse, and Roget, as well as that of Du Paty de

Clam. Capt. Freystaetter, one of the judges of the Court Martial of 1894, declares that nothing but the *bordereau* was communicated during the trial, proving that it was in the jury room after the audience that the secret document was communicated.

May.—M. Ballot-Beaupré makes his report.

June 3.—The revision of the Dreyfus case is voted by the Cour de Cassation. The case is referred to the Rennes Court Martial.

June 6.—Capt. Dreyfus leaves Guiana for France on the cruiser *Sfax*.

June 12.—The Dupuy Cabinet resigns.

June 22.—New Cabinet formed with General de Galliffet as Minister of War.

July 1.—Captain Dreyfus arrives at Quiberon.

Aug. 7.—The Court-Martial on Capt. Dreyfus begins at Rennes.

Sept. 9.—Capt. Dreyfus recondemned by a majority of five to two, with extenuating circumstances.

THE ACT OF ACCUSATION, 1894.

Report of Commandant A. d'Ormescheville.

COMMANDANT D'ORMESCHEVILLE, RAPPORTEUR OF THE FIRST COURT MARTIAL, HAVING PROCEEDED TO REGULAR INSTRUCTION, MADE THE FOLLOWING REPORT, WHICH IS THE ACT OF ACCUSATION.

December 3, 1894.

Captain Dreyfus, of the 14th Artillery, *stagiaire* to the staff-major of the army, is accused of having, in 1894, given information to several agents of foreign Powers, with the object of giving them the means of committing hostilities or undertaking a war against France, and of having delivered to them secret documents on which was based the order given by M. General Military Governor of Paris, Nov. 3, 1894.

Dreyfus is accused of having, in 1894, had dealings with several agents of foreign Powers, giving them information which would enable them to commit hostilities or undertake a war with France.

The basis of the accusation against Dreyfus is a letter, not signed and not dated, which is in the *dossier*, proving that these military confidential documents were delivered to an agent of a foreign Power.

General Gonse, sub-chief of the staff-major general of the army, into whose hands the documents fell, gave them, after their seizure, October 15th, to Du Paty de Clam, Chief of the Battalion of Infantry hors cadre, ordered October 14th, 1894, by the Minister of War, as officer of the police judiciary, to institute proceedings against Captain Dreyfus.

From the seizure of this letter, General Gonse has declared and affirmed to the officer of police commissioned to investigate, that he had some documents addressed to a foreign Power, which had come into his possession, but that after the formal order of the Minister of War he could not state by what means the documents had come into his possession.

The exact details of the inquiry which took place in the

offices of the staff-major of the army are found contained in the report which Du Paty de Clam addressed to the Minister of War, October 31 last, and which was a part of the *dossier*. An examination of this report shows that it was done without any haste and especially without any person having signed it *a priori*, and it is on this the inquiry has been conducted.

This inquiry is divided into two parts, one preliminary inquiry in order to arrive at the discovery of the culprit, if possible, then the regulation inquiry by the officer of police.

The very nature of the documents addressed to the agent of a foreign Power at the same time with the criminal letter, established the fact that it was an officer who was the author of the letter and who had sent it and the documents; moreover, that this officer belonged to the artillery, three of the notes or documents sent concerning this branch of the army. After a careful examination of all the handwriting of the officers employed in the offices of the staff-major, it was decided that the writing of Dreyfus presented a remarkable similarity to that of the criminal letter. The Minister of War, upon the report which was made to him, ordered that the writing of the letter should be studied and compared with the writing of Dreyfus. M. Gobert, expert of the Bank of France and of the Court of Appeal, was commissioned by General Gonse to make the examination, and for this purpose received some documents, October 4th, 1894. Some days after the receipt of these documents M. Gobert asked M. Gonse, who went to see him, the name of the guilty person; naturally the latter refused to give it to him.

A few days afterwards M. Gobert was asked to submit his conclusions and the documents which had been confided to him, he having shown his desire for more time in the matter.

October 13th, in the morning, M. Gobert submitted his conclusions in the form of a letter to the Minister. They are worded as follows:—

"The criminal letter might be that of another person than the one suspected."

M. Gobert's manner having displayed a certain defiance, the Minister of War asked the Prefect of Police for the opinion of M. Bertillon.

Some specimens of writing and a photograph of the criminal letter were then submitted to him, and he proceeded to their examination while awaiting the return of the documents confided to M. Gobert. After the return of these documents by M. Gobert, they were sent to M. Bertillon, who, on the evening of October 13th, drew up his conclusions, which are worded as follows:—"If one goes on the hypothesis that the document is forged, it appears manifest that it is the same person who has written the letter and the documents in question."

In compliance with the order of the Minister of War, dated October 14th, 1894, Du Paty de Clam proceeded to the arrest of Captain Dreyfus on October 15th.

Before the actual arrest, and in order that Dreyfus might know the accusation against him, and prove his innocence if possible, Du Paty de Clam submitted him to the following test:—He made him write a letter in which were enumerated the documents figuring in the criminal letter.

As soon as Dreyfus perceived the object of this letter, his writing, which was up to that point regular, became irregular, and he showed signs of uneasiness. Questioned about this, he declared that his fingers were cold. Now the temperature in the office of the Minister was medium; Dreyfus had been there for a quarter of an hour, and the first four lines written presented no signs of trembling.

After having arrested and interrogated Dreyfus, Du Paty de Clam, the same day, Oct. 15, made a search in Dreyfus' house. This superior officer having heard no witness, the duty fell upon us, and by reason of the necessary secrecy, the inquiry in which we heard twenty-three witnesses was as laborious as it was delicate.

It appears, from the testimony of witnesses, that during the two years that Dreyfus spent as *stagiaire* to the General Staff, he was seen in different offices, that his actions were suspicious, that he was found alone at late hours in other offices than his own and where there was no excuse for his presence. In this way he was able to look up matters which might interest him. He was also able, without being seen by anyone, to go into offices other than his for the same motive. It was remarked

by the Chief of the section that during his stay in the 4th Bureau Dreyfus was specially interested in the study of *dossiers* of mobilization, so that in leaving this bureau he possessed all the mysteries of the concentration upon the network of the East in time of war.

The examination, as well as the conclusions formed on the subject of the criminal letter, belong more particularly to the experts in writing. However, at first sight, and afterwards, we must say that the writing of this document presents a great similarity to the different documents found in the *dossier*, notably in the slanting of the writing, the omission of dates and the cutting of words in two at the end of lines, which are the features of the letters written by Dreyfus (see his letter to the Procureur of the Republic of Versailles and the letters or cards to his *fiancée* which are in the *dossier*). In regard to the signature the comparison fails because it ought to fail. Colonel Fabre, chief of the 4th Bureau of the staff-major of the army, in his deposition said that he had been struck by the similarity of the writing of the criminal documents and the writing of Dreyfus when he was in Bureau No. 4.

Lieutenant-Colonel d'Aboville, sub-chief of the same bureau, said in his deposition that the resemblance of the writing of the criminal documents to the writing of the documents of comparison was very striking.

As regards the experts who reported to us the first phase of the inquiry, that is to say in the commencement of the month of October last, we find first the hurried letter of M. Gobert, which is very vague. The wording of the conclusion of this expert shows that the anonymous letter that he examined could be or might not be from the person accused. It is to be observed that M. Gobert received, among the documents for comparison written by the hands of Dreyfus, a work entitled "Studies upon measures in times of war." This document, which contains a detailed *exposé* of the resources of the Bank of France, in case of war, attracted the attention of M. Gobert, who is employed by the Bank of France, and is to-day an expert on writing there.

Captain Dreyfus having had, in the course of his work, to consult the principal officers of that bank, he was quite well

known by a number of its *employés*. It was without doubt his fact which led M. Gobert to tell us that he had surmised he name of the person suspected, but that no one had any knowledge of it. Be that as it may, M. Gobert, as we have said, for some unknown reason had asked General Gonse, sub-chief of the General Staff, the name of the guilty person. What reason had he for doing so? Many hypotheses can be advanced. We can say that such a demand, in contradiction to the professional attitude of an expert in handwriting, warrants the supposition that the account rendered by M. Gobert to the Minister (which, not being certified under oath, was merely in the way of information) was written under the influence of bias, contrary to the invariable practice of professional experts in such matters.

In consequence, this account seems to us suspicious, to say the least. Its dubiousness of tone has no value from the standpoint of law. It does not contain any technical discussion which would allow one to understand on what facts M. Gobert has based his judgment.

We will add that M. Gobert, when asked to add technical explanation to his report, refused; that moreover, before taking the oath, he declared to us that if we should call him in view of making a second expert investigation, a regular one this time, in the Dreyfus affair, he would refuse to do so.

As we have said before, the task of examination given to M. Gobert by the Minister of War was also entrusted to M. Bertillon, who formulated, October 13th, 1894, his conclusion as follows:—

"If one puts aside the hypothesis of a forged document with the greatest care, it appears manifest that it is one and the same person who has written the letter and the documents in question."

In his report of October 23rd, given after a more thorough examination, bearing upon a larger number of documents, M. Bertillon formulated the following conclusions, which are much more affirmative. "The proof is peremptory. You know what my conviction was in the first place, it is now absolute—complete without any limitation."

The report of M. Charavay, expert in writing near the

Tribunal of the Seine, given under oath, contains, first of all, a detailed technical discussion, and the conclusions which resulted from it are given in the following words—"Based on the statements made in the present report, I, the undersigned expert, conclude that the criminal document No. 1 is written by the same hand as the test documents from 2 to 30."

The report of M. Teyssonières, expert in handwriting near the Civil Tribunal, given under oath, contains, like the preceding report, a detailed technical discussion of the documents. His conclusions are thus: "Based on the preceding, I declare on my conscience that the writing of the criminal piece No. 1 is by the same hand which has written documents 2 to 30."

The report of M. Pelletier, expert, &c., given under oath, and which bore upon the comparison of the handwriting of the criminal documents with that of two persons, contains, like the preceding reports, a technical discussion of the documents examined. His conclusions are as follows:—"Summing up the whole thing, I do not consider myself warranted in attributing to either one or the other of the persons suspected the writing of the criminal documents."

It is worthy of note that the experts Charavay, Teyssonnières and Pelletier, after taking the oath, were put in relation with M. Bertillon, who told them that he was at their disposal to furnish them with certain *pelures*, the photographs of which were not as yet finished, and which were of great importance by reason of the comparisons to be made of the handwritings. Of the three experts above named, only two returned to see M. Bertillon and receive from him communication of these *pelures*; these two were Charavay and Teyssonières.

The third, M. Pelletier, did not go again, and did his work, which bore upon the comparison of two handwritings instead of one with the criminal letter, without the help of the documents that M. Bertillon proposed to give him, and which must have had decidedly as much interest for him as for his colleagues.

Dreyfus was subjected to a long interrogatory by M. Du Paty de Clam. His answers are full of contradictions, to say the least. Among them some are particularly interesting to note

here, notably one at the time of his arrest, October 15th last, when he was searched and said: "Take my keys; open everything in my house, you will find nothing."

The search which was made at his house resulted very nearly as he said; but one is justified in thinking that if any letters, even of the family, except those written to Madame Dreyfus—if even letters from shopkeepers had contained anything compromising they would naturally have been destroyed. The whole of the interrogatory put by M. Du Paty de Clam is full of persistent denials by Dreyfus, and also of protestations against the crime of which he is accused. At the beginning of that interrogatory Dreyfus said at first that he thought he recognised in the criminal documents the handwriting of an officer employed in the office of the General Staff of the Army; afterwards, before us, he retracted this allegation, which ought to fall by its own weight, in the face of the complete dissimilarity of the handwriting of the officer he had in mind with that of the criminal document.

Another extraordinary answer made in the course of the first interrogatory is that which related to the insecurity of the official documents which, according to Dreyfus, were not in perfect security at the second Bureau of the General Staff of the Army at the time when he was employed in it. This allegation of insecurity has not been confirmed by any of the witnesses heard on this subject; he must therefore have made it with some object in view.

Lastly, there exists, in the first interrogatory, some absolutely incoherent answers, such as these: "The experts are mistaken, the incriminating document is the work of a forger; some one has tried to imitate my handwriting. These documents might have been written with the help of fragments of my handwriting put together with care to form a whole which would resemble this letter. The ensemble of the letter does not resemble my writing; it is not even an attempt to imitate it."

In the interrogatory of Dreyfus, his answers have always been obtained with great difficulty, as one will observe from the many words scratched and underlined in the official report of the interrogatory. When Dreyfus ventured an affirmation, he would hasten to weaken it by vague or mixed-up

phrases, trying always, in spite of former remarks, to question or to start the conversation without being asked to do so. That system, if we had allowed it to be adopted, might have had some unfortunate consequences for the form even of the interrogatory, on account of the extreme cleverness of Captain Dreyfus.

If one compares the answers that Captain Dreyfus has made to us with the depositions of some of the witnesses heard, they will draw from it the painful impression that he often veils the truth, and that, whenever he finds himself hard pressed, he gets out of the trouble without much difficulty, owing to his mental alertness.

Summing up the depositions of several witnesses, the facts extracted are these: that Dreyfus had often drawn upon himself the suspicion of his comrades, that he had asked Captain Boullenger questions about the secret and confidential affair in his charge, which Boullenger refused to answer; also that Captain Bosse had seen him, September 8th last, working in his office on some unauthorized kind of paper instead of using the same official papers as the document which he had to bring up to date; also Captain Maistre said to him that he would give him communication of the important work which he had in charge, but in his office only. It appears that Dreyfus indulged in indiscreet conversations, that he made investigations of matters not in his own department; that he had a habit of ferreting; that he seemed to be bent on procuring information, either written or oral, before finishing his term of service as *stagiaire* with the General Staff of the Army.

His attitude seemed to be one of cross-purposes, and had a suspicious appearance, like that of one who practices spying. His actions, taken in connection with the similarity of the handwriting, were a serious factor against him when the question of his arraignment was brought up.

* * * * * * *

Although Dreyfus declared to us that he never had gambling propensities, it appears from the information we have been able to gather on the subject that he frequented several Paris clubs where there is much gambling. In the course of his interrogatory he acknowledged that he had gone to the Press Club, but only

as a guest to dine, and that he had never played there. The gambling clubs of Paris, such as the Washington Club, the Betting Club, the Fencing Club, and the Press Club, have no Club books, and their frequenters, being a shady class of people, the testimony of any witnesses we might have called from there would not have been trustworthy; hence they were not heard.

* * * * * * *

In regard to his travels, Dreyfus stated that he could go to Alsace in secret almost whenever he wanted to, and that the German authorities would shut their eyes to his presence. This faculty of travelling clandestinely contrasts strongly with the difficulties which our officers experienced at that time, and at all times, in obtaining permission or passports from the German authorities allowing them to return to Alsace. It may be there was a reason for this which the limited time at our disposal will not admit of our fathoming.

In regard to the hints of Dreyfus about the baiting which the Minister of War practised, it appears to us that this accusation was trumped up by Dreyfus in order to defend himself for having any connection with compromising documents, and perhaps this loophole of escape in his mind made him less careful about disguising his handwriting.

On the other hand, the slight alterations which he did make might have had for an object the possible argument of forgery, should the documents after having reached their destination eventually fall into the hands of the Minister of War.

As to the proofs relating to the knowledge Captain Dreyfus had of the notes or documents enumerated in the criminal documents and which have accompanied it, the first interrogatory, as well as the one he has just been submitted to, convinces me, in spite of his denials, that he was in easy position to furnish them. On examining these documents, we find first of all the note upon the hydraulic brake 120.

The allegations of Dreyfus on the subject of this brake go to show that it was easy for him to procure, either through the artillery, or by conversations with certain officers of the General Staff, the elements necessary to fabricate the note in question.

As to the note upon the *troupes de couverture* with the restriction that some modifications might be brought in by the

new plan, to us it seems impossible that Dreyfus did not have knowledge of the modifications bearing on the plan of campaign in the month of April last, which, though confidential, was not altogether secret, being freely discussed by officers of the staff both among themselves and in the presence of Dreyfus.

In that which concerns the note upon certain changes in the artillery staff, an agitation for the suppression of the *pontonniers*, we cannot believe that Dreyfus was not interested in such a transformation, and only knew of it when it became official. About the note on Madagascar, which presented the greatest interest for one of the foreign Powers, if, as everything suggested, an expedition had been sent at the beginning of 1895, Captain Dreyfus would have easily been able to procure the official note. In fact, last February Corporal Bernillon, then Secretary to Colonel de Sancy, chief of the second Bureau of the General Staff, made a copy of a work of about twenty-two pages on Madagascar in an antechamber adjoining the office of this superior officer.

The making of that copy took about five days, and during that time original and copy were left in a portfolio on the writing table of the corporal when he left his work. Besides, during office hours this corporal was often absent for a while, leaving his work in full view on the table (consequently easy to read), for he never thought that any officer not belonging to that office, or in fact any officer unknown to him, would be in the room.

This corporal declared to us in his deposition, but without giving any precise date, that Captain Dreyfus, whom he knew, had come four or five times into the room to see Colonel de Sancy, while he was doing service at the German section. This document could also have been read by Dreyfus when he was put back to the English section, which was occupied just then with Madagascar, because these documents had been placed temporarily in an open pasteboard box in that section. In what concerns the project of the *Manuel de tir* of artillery on March 14, 1894, Dreyfus acknowledged, in his first interrogatory, that he had spoken of it several times with the superior officer of the 2nd Bureau of the General Staff.

In conclusion, the elements of the accusation against Dreyfus

are of two kinds, moral and material. I have examined the first element; the second element consists in the criminal letter whose examination by the majority of experts, as well as by us, and by the witnesses who have seen it, has proved, in spite of voluntary dissimilarities, a complete similarity with the writing of Dreyfus.

Besides the preceding, I can say that Dreyfus possesses a very extended knowledge, a remarkable memory; that he speaks several languages, notably German, which he knows thoroughly, and Italian, which he pretends to know very little about now; that he has a supple character, even obsequious, which is very useful in the relation of a spy with foreign agents. Captain Dreyfus was therefore well fitted for the shameful mission that he had mapped out for himself or accepted, but which, happily for France, was put an end to by the discovery of the criminal letter.

In consequence, I am of opinion that Captain Dreyfus, Stagiaire, etc., be arraigned for having, in 1894, at Paris, delivered to a foreign Power a certain number of confidential documents relating to national defence, thus enabling them to undertake a war with France.

A. D'ORMESCHEVILLE.

Made at Paris, December 3, 1894. *Reporter.*

ANALYSIS OF THE ACT OF ACCUSATION AND OF THE ALLEGED CONFESSION.

[*Report of Conseiller Bard, Court of Cassation, October 27th,* 1898.]

Besides the experts, the reporter, d'Ormescheville, heard twenty military witnesses and—we note in passing, because this detail, contrary to judicial customs, has its interest—that not one of these witnesses was confronted with the accused, that not once was the accused in the presence of those

who accused him, and permitted to make any explanations to them.

Moreover, the twenty military witnesses cited were not all witnesses for the prosecution; several of them testified only to entirely indifferent facts or upon the character of the accused. As for those whom the prosecution considered regular witnesses, they indicated that Dreyfus liked to inform himself on military matters which were outside of his duties, and that he could get into the offices where he was not summoned; but not one of them brought out any fact that could fix upon him the crime of high treason.

As to the motive which could have influenced the accused to commit a crime so abominable, the report gives no explanation. The accused had a comfortable fortune; it is true that this is not a proof of incorruptibility, but he led a life in keeping with his resources. The reporter, therefore, looked for gambling, women or deceived ambition as the cause; what he found, supposing it to be fully established, constitutes information of morality; the reporter was not able to see anything else.

If Dreyfus complained of unjust prejudice against him, he nevertheless graduated from the War School ninth out of forty-two, with the note "Very good," his brevet of Etat-Major, and his admission to the General Staff.

As for the two women he knew in 1893 and 1894, it is found that there were only some visits or interviews, to which Dreyfus himself put an end.

As for gambling, the report, without affirming that Dreyfus lost, or even played, says that "it appears from information gathered" that he frequented circles where there was gambling.

This information is represented in two notes, that cannot even be called police notes, for nothing indicates their origin; they are not even signed by any agent whatever, and they are not indorsed by any testimony, which is perhaps improper, when it relates to the honour of an officer, if he is accused of the greatest of crimes. No accusation of gambling was brought at the Rennes trial.

However that may be, the motive of this monstrous crime remains mysterious, like the circumstances of its perpetration; one thing alone accuses Dreyfus, and that is the *bordereau*.

To declare that Dreyfus wrote the *bordereau*, M. d'Ormescheville cites his personal criticism; but in stating, with other persons, that there is a similarity of handwriting between the incriminating letter and the handwriting of Dreyfus, he adds that "the examination as well as the conclusions to be formed on this subject belong more particularly to experts on handwriting," and at the end of his report he recalls that "the majority of the experts" have pronounced against the accused. The opinion of the experts, therefore, gave decisive weight in the Dreyfus affair (as well as in the Esterhazy affair). Now as the contradictory and irreconcilable results of these experts constitute one of the reasons for revision, it will be in

order to make them known together with sufficient details.

In this stage of the procedure, after the report of Commandant d'Ormescheville, dated December 3rd, Commandant Brisset, Commissary of the Government, makes a report tending to the appearance of the accused before the Council of War, December 4th, and the same day, General Saussier, Governor of Paris, signed the order that Captain Dreyfus should be tried by court-martial.

All the witnesses who were heard in the instruction, as well as Commandant Du Paty de Clam, were cited before the court-martial, including the experts who were engaged in the affair. A dozen witnesses, of whom half belonged to the army, were also summoned at the request of the accused. The entire debate took place with "huis clos" the most rigorous; it continued four days, and December 28th the accused was unanimously declared guilty and condemned to transportation to a fortified enclosure.

Notwithstanding the protestations of the condemned, protestations which were unknown to the public, the sentence against Dreyfus did not raise any indignation and could not raise any observation, except the regret that a crime like this should rank in the category of political crimes with a penalty like that of transportation which, applied according to law, must guarantee political prisoners against the excessive hardships of penitentiary *régime* established for common law

criminals. The attention of the public authorities was even, and very justly, called to the opportunity of revising from this point of view the legal rulings governing spies.

No other incident occurred during the year 1895 and the first months of 1896. But, before passing to the Esterhazy affair, and to follow events in their chronological order, we must inform the Court, as far as is in our power, on the allegation that after the degradation of Alfred Dreyfus, he made confessions to Captain Lebrun-Renault.

Not that those who have experience in judicial matters can attach great importance to the incident which occurred.

In certain circumstances, words which would seem an explicit and formal avowal do not for the judge constitute an irrevocable proof. You had a recent example in the Esterhazy affair, when the woman Pays having acknowledged before the judge that she was the author of a telegram, this was found to be false, and the Court decided that this declaration, revoked later, must not be retained against the accused.

It is generally required that an avowal shall be produced before a judge, or at least before a legal police officer; that it shall be precise, and not the result of equivocal expressions; that it shall agree with information already obtained; all these circumstances are found to be very incomplete in this instance.

Nevertheless, we are obliged to consider this

question, as a *dossier* has been communicated to us, which contains two reports and the speech of the Minister of War, Cavaignac, at the session of the Chamber of Deputies, July 7th, 1898.

One of the reports is by Captain Tassin, of September 7th last. Contrary to the indication of the *dossier*, there is no question of avowals made by Captain Dreyfus.

The second report must be read. We do not know if it was considered convincing. We fear that it confirms the doubts and thickens the obscurities that surround this incident.

REPORT OF LIEUTENANT-COLONEL GUERIN, SOUS-CHEF OF THE ETAT-MAJOR OF THE MILITARY GOVERNMENT OF PARIS, ON THE DEGRADATION, JANUARY 5, 1895, AND ON THE DECLARATIONS MADE BY EX-CAPTAIN DREYFUS TO CAPTAIN LEBRUN-RENAULT, OF THE REPUBLICAN GUARD.

After having been placed, January 5, 1895, by the Military Government of Paris, at the disposition of General Darras, to assist at the military degradation of Captain Dreyfus, I went that day at quarter past five in the morning to the Military School, cour Morland. Captain . . . . was ordered to verify the cards of representatives of the French Press, reserve and territorial officers, and to place them in the order which was arranged for them.

The prison van, escorted by a squad of the Republican Guard commanded by Captain Lebrun-Renault, entered the Military School at forty-five minutes past seven, and was stopped at the cour Morland, before the office of the adjutant of the garrison. Dreyfus stepped out and was conducted to this office and remained there until the moment when all the troops being in position, the captain of the garrison came, about

five minutes before nine o'clock, to conduct him at nine o'clock to the place marked for the ceremony.

Meeting Captain Lebrun-Renault at the entrance of the office, he at once told me of his interview with Captain Dreyfus. At the first words, as it did not seem to me advisable that this should be limited to us two, and a group of officers being near us, I begged Captain Lebrun-Renault to relate to them the confidences that Dreyfus had made to him, on account of their importance and interest.

This officer then told us that he had talked of Tahiti with Dreyfus, the place where he would probably be sent. He boasted that the climate would suit him very well and also his wife and children. Captain Dreyfus, showing him the braid on his dolman, told him that it was pride he had lost. He added this declaration, "If I delivered these documents, they were without any value, and it was in order to procure more important ones."

I guarantee the strict exactitude of the words underlined (they are all underlined), and the real meaning of these words, which are too characteristic to be ever forgotten by me.

The first stroke of nine sounded; Dreyfus was degraded. He protested his innocence, passed before the front rank of troops, and stepped into the prison van which was waiting for him. It left at once, and Dreyfus was placed under civil authority.

I went without delay to the office of the adjutant of the garrison when the parade was finished, and took part in the passing of the troops before General Darras. After the departure of the last troop, I left the Military School myself, and went to give a verbal account of the incidents of the morning to the military governor of Paris, as well as of the declarations made by the condemned to Captain Lebrun-Renault.

In the evening, about half-past six, Commandant Picquart, who had been present at the degradation, came to my office, Rue Cambon, to ask me for information in regard to the confidences of Dreyfus to the captain of the Republican Guard who had escorted him in the morning. I did not even know his name, and did not learn it until the next morning. He asked me if Dreyfus had indicated the nature of the documents he had

delivered. I could not give him anything precise on the subject, and I proposed to him to have Captain Lebrun-Renault come to my office either the next morning or the morning after, the next morning being Sunday. We left the Rue Cambon together; Commandant Picquart took me in his carriage as far as the Cours la Reine, where I left him, and he went to the Ministry.

The convocation was, furthermore, useless: General Gonse, sub-chief of the Etat-Major, came on January 6 to the Etat-Major to ask Captain Lebrun-Renault's address, went to find him, took him to the Ministry, which received his declarations.

(*Signed*) LIEUTENANT-COLONEL GUÉRIN.

Paris, February 14, 1898.

Copy certified September 16, 1898.

What date is this report? You have noticed, gentlemen, it is February 14th, 1898. The degradation took place January 5th, 1895. Why did Lieutenant-Colonel Guérin prepare this report three years after? Evidently because, at that time, it was desired to get together all the reports that were in circulation on the incident which the Chamber of Deputies was just discussing. But, as the Minister of War, Cavaignac, very justly said, preference should be given to the earlier testimony. Now, between what was reported as being the declaration of Captain Lebrun-Renault, made at the time of the degradation, and the vague remembrances of Colonel Guérin, there is a profound difference. According to the version attributed the next morning to Captain Lebrun-Renault, Dreyfus should have said, "The Minister knows that I am innocent, he sent me word to that effect by Commandant Du Paty de Clam, in my prison,

three or four days ago. The Minister knows very well that if I delivered documents, they were without value, and that it was in order to procure more important ones." Of these protestations of innocence, of the intervention of the Minister convinced of this innocence, there is no longer any trace in the report of Colonel Guérin.

Two explanations are possible: Either Captain Lebrun-Renault, who should, it would seem, have reserved for his chiefs so grave a confidence, spoke a little carelessly before his comrades who were anxious to fathom the state of mind of the condemned; or Captain Lebrun-Renault gave his comrades the same version which he was to furnish the next day, and it is then that it was realised how the truth can be perverted in passing from mouth to mouth.....Our great fabulist has written a charming apologue upon this, and although it applies to women, men and even soldiers may profit by it. We have not the slightest doubt that within a few weeks it was considered as an averred fact among those who were not thoroughly acquainted with the state of affairs, that Dreyfus had made avowals; it was such a relief to know that no mistake had been made!

The same reservation should be made about the testimony of Captain d'Attel cited before the Chamber.

Captain Lebrun-Renault, it has been said, is not the only witness who received confessions from Dreyfus; another officer, Captain d'Attel, also

received them, and transmitted them immediately to officers who testify thereupon. Captain d'Attel died a short time after under rather tragical circumstances. But we have the declarations of officers who received the assertions furnished by him. Here are these declarations :—

Captain Anthoine has the honour to state that, the day of the degradation of Dreyfus, he met, in coming out of the room where Dreyfus had been locked up, Captain d'Attel, his friend, who had been on duty, belonging to the staff of the place.

D'Attel told Captain Anthoine that Dreyfus had just said before him : " For what I have given up, it was not worth the trouble. If they had left me alone, I would have had more in exchange."

Captain Anthoine immediately repeated this to Commander de Mitry.

Here is another declaration :—

Commander de Mitry has the honour to bear witness . . . Captain Anthoine repeated to him the conversation which he had just had with Captain d'Attel, of the staff, since deceased. Captain Anthoine told him substantially that Dreyfus had made remarks in presence of d'Attel, from which it resulted that if Dreyfus gave up documents, he did so with the view of obtaining some in exchange for them.

M. Cavaignac, whose principle it is that preference must be given to the testimonies of the very day, does not indicate the date of these testimonies ; but as they have only been occasioned by the death of Captain d'Attel, it is to be inferred that these contributions to the inquiry are very tardy, like those of Lieut.-Col. Guérin, and you have had opportunity to remark that we arrive at the attestations of the third degree, Commander de

Mitry declaring that Captain Anthoine has told him that Captain d'Attel had reported to him a certain remark made by Dreyfus. . . . How is it that Captain d'Attel himself, who has played an official part in this dismal ceremony, was not examined at the opportune moment and by whom it may concern?

It is upon these elements, the fragility of which need not be demonstrated, that the following conclusion has been arrived at.

"Either men's testimony will never more have any value, or else it results from these precise and harmonious testimonies that Dreyfus has pronounced this sentence: 'If I have given up these documents,' etc.

"Well, I weigh these words in my conscience. These avowals are denied; it will perhaps be said to-morrow that they were wrenched by threats and by promises; no matter what people may have imagined to have been the motive, I declare upon my conscience that I cannot admit that a man can have pronounced these words: 'If I have given up these documents . . . . ' if he has not really given them up."—*M. Cavaignac's Speech at the Chamber of Deputies*, July 7, 1898.

Is this conclusion justified? We will prove to you, by M. Cavaignac's own speech, that upon this point the Minister deviates quite involuntarily from the text attributed to Captain Lebrun-Renault; but one may go further, one may think that the text, supposing it to be exact, would not authorise the conclusion drawn from it by the orator. If Dreyfus had admitted that he was guilty of letting himself be allured, it does not follow that he would have admitted he w

traitor and the author of the *bordereau*. It would, on the contrary, have been a defence against the accusation of espionage. Suppose that this defence had been produced before a court-martial, and that it had been admitted to be well founded? Would Dreyfus have been declared guilty of treason? Evidently not.

However, we will not dwell any longer on this way of looking upon the matter, for the true text (we mean that which would have been produced the day after the degradation) excludes far more powerfully still the interpretation which has seemed so legitimate to the Minister of War. It is to himself that we apply for the text.

These words having been published, Captain Lebrun-Renault, one of the officers of whom I have spoken, was ordered to appear at the Ministry of War, and there, before the Minister of War, he related what he had heard. He had been conducted to the Ministry of War by General Gonse, who remained during the conversation, and who, on the 6th of January, 1895, wrote to General de Boisdeffre, who was away, the letter which I will read.

"I hasten to tell you that I have myself conducted Captain Lebrun-Renault of the Garde Républicaine before the Minister, who, after having heard him, sent him to the President. In a general way, Captain Lebrun-Renault's conversation with Dreyfus was chiefly a monologue of the latter, who contradicted and corrected himself incessantly. The following were the prominent features:—

"'Upon the whole, no original documents have been given up, but merely copies.' Coming from an individual who always declares that he knows nothing, this phrase, to say the least, was a singular one. Then, protesting that he is not guilty, he ended by saying: 'The Minister knows that I am innocent, he has sent Commander Du Paty de Clam to tell me so in prison,

three or four days ago, and he knows that if I have given up documents, they are documents of no importance, and that I gave them up in order to obtain more serious ones.'

"The Captain concluded by expressing the opinion that Dreyfus made partial avowals or began an avowal mingled with reticences and falsehoods."

I resume M. Cavaignac's speech :—

Captain Lebrun-Renault himself inscribed the same day, January 6th, upon a leaf taken from his memorandum book, the following note, which is still in his hands:—

"Yesterday, degradation of Captain Dreyfus. Having been requested to take him from the prison of the Cherche-Midi to the Military School, I remained with him from 8 till 9 o'clock. He was very dejected; asserted that within three years his innocence would be recognised. At about half-past 8, without my asking him, he told me: 'The Minister knows very well that if I gave up documents they were of no value, and that I did it to procure myself more important ones.' He requested me to give orders to the adjutant charged to degrade him, to accomplish this mission as speedily as possible."

From this document, the only contemporary document presented, it results that Dreyfus never ceased to protest that he was innocent; that he asserted that the Minister knew that he was innocent, and that he gave as a proof thereof that the Minister knew very well that if he had given up documents, these documents were of no importance, and that it was done with the view to obtain serious ones. Now, five days before the convict had addressed to his counsel, Me. Demange, the following note, which clearly explains these words:

Commander Du Paty came to-day, 31st of December, 1894, at half past five in the evening, after the rejection of the appeal,

to ask me, on behalf of the Minister, if I had not perhaps been victim of my own imprudence, if I had not simply been wanting to decoy, and if afterwards I had not let myself be drawn into a fatal succession of circumstances. I answered him that I had never had any connection with any agent or attaché of any foreign Power, that I had never tried to inveigle anyone, that I was innocent. After Commander Du Paty's departure I wrote the following letter to the Minister:

"In conformity with your order I have received the visit of Commander Du Paty de Clam, to whom I have again declared that I was innocent, that I had never even committed an imprudence. I am condemned. I have no favour to ask except that for the sake of my honour, which I hope will be restored to me some day, once I am gone, unceasing inquiries be made; this is the only favour I ask."

This is what took place the day of the degradation. The convict said:

The Minister knows that I am innocent, he has sent somebody to tell me so; he knows that if I have given up documents without importance, it was to obtain some serious ones; that is to say, he knows that at all events I am not a traitor, and he lets me suffer.

The Ministerial version haunted the mind of the convict and he invoked it as a supreme protestation.

It is superfluous to point out how the slightest variation might accentuate the sense of the phrase. Put: "The Minister has sent someone to tell me that if I have given up documents . . . ." or "The Minister believes that if I have given up documents . . . ." or again: "The Minister knows that if I had given up documents . . . .", and there no more remains the slightest room for a discussion. It was therefore very important to make an official,

or, at least, an ordinary report, such as all officers of the police charged with a mission are in the habit of furnishing, of the expressions used by the convict; to verify them by questioning the convict—in short, to make an inquiry, since these expressions appeared to throw a new light upon the affair. It was, perhaps, an occasion to appoint a competent functionary for the purpose of making an inquiry. Nothing of the kind was done.

General Gonse, in his letter to the Chief of the Court-Martial General, confines himself to giving the impressions of Captain Lebrun-Renault. "Captain Lebrun-Renault has concluded," he says, "by expressing the opinion that Dreyfus made avowals or commencements of avowals mingled with reticences and falsehoods."

If Dreyfus had control enough over himself to envelop his avowals with reticences and falsehoods, it is hard to understand how he could have divulged a compromising secret to an officer of the police who only remained with him an instant, when he had resisted without failing during the examination with which you are acquainted, and again when proclaiming his innocence while going through the torture of being degraded, and when he knew he would have to continue to proclaim his innocence indefinitely without growing weak or tired.

It seems that such was at that time the belief of the Government, and if the question itself has not been thoroughly investigated, it is because it was thought that it was of no importance.

NOTES FROM CAPTAIN DREYFUS TO HIS WIFE ON THE DAY OF HIS MILITARY DEGRADATION, JANUARY 5TH, 1895.

My darling: To tell you what I have suffered to-day, I do not wish; your grief is so great that I am not going to increase it.

In promising you to live, in promising you to resist until my name and honour are re-established, I have made the greatest sacrifice that a man of heart, an honest man whose honour has just been snatched away from him, can make. Provided, my God, that my physical forces do not fail me! My conscience, which in no way reproaches me, sustains me; but I am near the end of patience and strength; to have consecrated all my life to honour, never to have sullied it, and to see myself where I am, after having been subjected to the most outrageous affront that can be inflicted on a soldier!

So, my darling, do everything in the world to find the real culprit, do not give it up for a single instant. It is my only hope in the horrible misfortune which follows me.

I will tell you later, when we are happy again, what I have suffered to-day, how many times, in the midst of these numerous peregrinations among real criminals (he speaks of the common law prisoners confined at La Santé), my heart has bled. I asked myself what I was doing there, why I was there! It seemed to me that I was the victim of a hallucination. But alas! my clothes torn and soiled brutally recall the truth to me; contemptuous glances that are cast upon me tell me too clearly why I am here.

Oh, alas! why can we not open, with a scalpel, the heart of people and read therein? All good people who saw me pass would read there, graven in letters of gold: "That man is a man of honour!" But how I understand them! In their place, I should have nothing but the highest contempt at the sight of an officer who was said to be a traitor.

But, alas, that is what is tragic: this traitor is not I.

(*The same day*).

I have the courageous soul of the soldier. I ask myself if I have the heroic soul of the martyr.

(*The Same Day.*)

Cheer up! I retain all my energy, strong in my pure and spotless conscience. I belong to my family. I owe it to my good name, I have not the right to desert while there remains in me a breath of life, I will struggle with the hope of soon seeing the light dawn. So, pursue all researches. . . . The physical sufferings are nothing, you know that I do not fear them; but my moral tortures are far from being finished. O my darling, what was I doing the day that I promised you to live? I really believed that my soul was stronger. To be always resigned when one is innocent, that is easy to say, but hard to do.

THE PART PLAYED BY COLONEL DU PATY DE CLAM AND COLONEL HENRY.

[*From the Report of M. Ballot-Beaupré, May 29th*, 1899.]

Here is the judgment, on Lieutenant-Colonel Du Paty de Clam, by Commandant Cuignet.

Du Paty is a proud fellow, vain even, whose vanity is still increased by the success of his career; he has always been, according to those who know him, on the watch for opportunities that would place him in the foreground. He is, at the same time, of a character easily influenced, has an insinuating disposition, knows well how to make a good impression on his chiefs; he is what we call, in military slang, a "smoke-doctor."

He was on the best of terms with General de Boisdeffre, and when the Dreyfus affair came up, it was he who pushed the arrest, and who had himself designated as an officer of the judicial police.

When Dreyfus was arrested in the office of General de Boisdeffre, M. Cochefert, who was present at the time, said to the General:

"Leave me a little time; in an hour or two from now, I will know what he has in his stomach (ventre)."

Du Paty protested that it was purely a military affair; he evidently feared that the honour of the confession would escape him, and he imagined, there and then, the scene of the dictation, hoping by this means to obtain the admissions of Dreyfus.

Dreyfus was, therefore, arrested immediately, and he was taken to the prison of Cherche-Midi by Henry, who in the carriage made him talk, and prepared an account of their conversation for the purpose of imputing a lie to him :—

Then I found myself in a room adjoining the one where he (Captain Dreyfus) was interrogated, and I heard, perfectly and very distinctly, Commandant Du Paty say to him, "You are accused of having delivered to a foreign Power a note upon covered troops, a note on Madagascar, a projected manual on artillery firing;" thus, when Captain Dreyfus asserted that Commandant Du Paty had not enumerated to him any of the documents in question, and that he confined himself to speaking of secret or confidential documents, Captain Dreyfus knowingly concealed the truth.

If there had been a lie, it was not Dreyfus who was guilty of it, but Henry himself.

In fact, according to the official text of the interrogatory by Du Paty de Clam, which, the 15th of October, preceded the incarceration, Dreyfus had only in a vague manner been accused of high treason.

Du Paty de Clam had not said to him, "You are accused of having delivered to a foreign Power a note on covered troops, a note on Madagascar, and a projected manual on artillery firing."

Du Paty de Clam had not said any more to him, in the subsequent interrogatories of the 18th, 22nd, and 24th October, in the course of which he had merely shown some detached words (of the incriminating note), without yet determining the accusation.

The 24th, particularly, the following colloquy took place between them.

Q.—You know then of what you are accused, when you said a little while ago that you did not know?

A.—I am always told that I have stolen documents, without being shown the foundation for the accusation. I ask that I be shown the incriminating papers, and I shall perhaps understand then the infernal plot or web that is being woven around me."

It was only on October 29th that, also in terms voluntarily inexact, Du Paty de Clam said to him: "Here is the photograph of a letter which is attributed to you. This letter was taken abroad by means of a photographic portfolio, and we are in possession of the film negative. Do you recognise this letter as being in your handwriting?"

And on the 31st he addressed to the Minister a report containing statements which do not figure in the interrogatory signed by Dreyfus; for example: "On two occasions I pretended to go out to send to the foreign agent to whom the incriminating document had been addressed, the letter that Captain Dreyfus had just written from my dictation. Each time he stopped me the moment I opened the door; the third time only, having again

become master of himself, he said to me, "Oh, well, try."

Nevertheless, said Commandant Cuignet, M. Du Paty de Clam asked himself if the Minister would find the charges sufficient and would transmit the *dossier* to the military governor of Paris; Henry, on his side, had the same thought.

It was necessary under these conditions, in order to force the hand of the Minister of War, General Mercier, to noise abroad the affair, which until then had remained absolutely secret.

The 28th of October, an editor of the journal the *Libre Parole*, M. Papillaud, received this letter:—

My dear friend, I told you so; it is Captain Dreyfus, who lives at 6, Avenue du Trocadéro, who was arrested the 15th for being a spy, and who is in prison at the Cherche-Midi-Jail. They say that he is travelling, but it is a lie, because they wish to keep the affair quiet. All Israel is moving.

Truly yours,

HENRY.

The 31st, the *Eclair* announced the arrest of a Jewish officer.

And November 1st, the *Libre Parole*, the violent anti-Semitic newspaper, had in large letters: *High treason, arrest of the Jewish Officer, A. Dreyfus.*

"As the journals had commenced to publish the affair," said General Mercier, "I asked the President of the Council to convene the Cabinet, which decided, All Saints Day, to put Dreyfus in the hands of military justice."

Is it Henry himself who had written the letter of October 28th? M. Papillaud, in the *Libre Parole* of April 3rd, 1899, declares—"For me this letter has only the value of an anonymous letter, as I do not know by whom it is signed."

But Commandant Cuignet believes that the indiscretion originated with Du Paty de Clam, who elsewhere denies it.

Du Paty indulged, for his own benefit, in reprehensible acts; it is he who, without the knowledge of his chiefs, informed the Press of the arrest of Dreyfus, which had been kept back by the Government for fifteen days; he wished in this way to force the hand of the Government and have the trial.

This manoeuvre—whoever may have been its author—(Du Paty de Clam or Henry)—had then succeeded.

On the 3rd of November the order for an inquiry was given.

And Commandant d'Ormescheville heard, in his examination, Henry, who, under oath, "maintained exactly the terms of his report," that is to say, the imputation of a lie directed against Dreyfus, when it was the imputation itself that was untruthful.

The examination finished, the Council of War was convened for the 19th of December, and during four days sat behind closed doors.

Du Paty de Clam and Henry were both summoned as witnesses.

The attitude of the first is characterised in a note which before the pleading Dreyfus sent to his

advocate, Me. Demange. This note is wholly in the hand of the accused.

Without Commandant Du Paty the whole accusation would already have fallen; it is he who stirs up hate. Has he the right thus to come constantly intervening in the debates? One would surely say that it was he who directed them.

Henry had an attitude still more significant.

He was delegated by the Minister of War to testify in the name of the Information Bureau.

General Zurlinden explains: "As in all trials for espionage, an officer from the Information Bureau was delegated by the Minister of War to testify in the name of the service: the officer designated was Henry."

It is in the name of the Information Bureau, in the name of the Chief of the General Staff, in the name of the Minister himself, that Henry spoke to the Council of War.

His word, therefore, must have considerable weight in the balance!

And what did he say?

Here is the note of Dreyfus:

After the deposition of Commandant Henry, unmeaning enough, Commandant Du Paty de Clam had him called to the bar. Commandant Henry has, then, made a terrible declaration, but without any proof. It is an infamy to come forward and make such a declaration without bringing any testimony to bear it out. To accuse an officer at the bar without bringing any proof—it is monstrous!

And Me. Demange added this comment:

Commandant Henry was heard twice by the audience. The first time he said nothing new; then he asked to be heard a

second time; he then declared with a solemn tone that, since the month of February, a person absolutely honourable * had stated to him that an officer of the Ministry of War was a traitor, and that in the month of March the same person had renewed his assertion, adding that it was an officer of the Second Bureau.

Dreyfus who, in the first six months of 1894, was in the Second Bureau, asked with violence that the honourable person be called by the Council of War; I, in my turn, insisted with energy, demanding the name of this honourable person, and calling upon the witness, in the name of the oath he had taken, to tell the whole truth. Commandant Henry replied to me: "When an officer has a terrible secret in his head, he does not confide it even to his cap"; then turning towards Dreyfus: "I assert, myself, that the traitor is there!"

The Councillor of State, M. Lépine, who in his official capacity as Prefect of Police attended the debates, expresses himself in these terms:

The deposition of Commandant Henry . . . . it was very short; it lasted some minutes hardly; it bore upon the suspicions of the Staff, upon the discovery of the *bordereau*. Some brief, categorical phrases; it would be impossible for me to quote from memory the terms of this sensational deposition; but the tone, the gestures, the attitude of the commandant, I see them yet. It was the apparition of the judge. When I recall at the end of four years this vision of Henry raising his hand, the Cross of the Legion of Honour on his large chest, it seems to me that there were only two words in his deposition: "It is he—I know it, I swear it!"

But how did Henry know that during the first six months of 1894 an officer of the Second Bureau was guilty of treason?

* It has been proved at the Rennes Court Martial that this "honourable person" was a foreigner in the pay of the War Office.

It was—according to General Roget—through an agent of the Information Bureau, who, in two reports of the 28th of March and the 6th of April, 1894, had declared that he knew from an honourable person, occupying a high position in Paris, M. de B . . . ., that among the officers of the Staff belonging, or having recently belonged, to the Second Bureau, was a traitor; and M. de B . . . . had personally, in June following, furnished verbal information to Henry of the same nature.

On this we must make three comments:

1st. That in the Picquart testimony we read: "I know perfectly the person called honourable, and if it is impossible for me to name him without asking the authorisation of the Minister, I can at least, if you desire it, say a word on the subject. This person I have characterised as worthless, and, in my opinion, he is nothing else; he was in relations with the foreign diplomatic world, and related to Henry, either directly, or by the intermediary of a police officer of lower grade, named Guénée, what was said between military attachés, and he repeated it, often without taking into account the value of what he heard. I have at another time given to this man, through Henry, a sum of 1200 francs to reward him for his services.

2nd. That in the reports of the agent Guénée of March 28th and April 6th there is no question of an officer of the Second Bureau.

3rd. That in a note addressed to the Keeper of Seals on September 10th, 1898, the Minister of War, General Zurlinden, merely said:

"Two months later, in 1894, in a conversation with Commandant Henry, M. de B—— returned to the same question, and renewed his accusation, fixing and specifiying that the correspondent of A and of B was an officer belonging or having belonged recently to the Second Bureau.

M. de B. . . . had he really furnished this information?

Nothing establishes it.

But the deposition of Henry, who asserted it as delegate of the Minister of War, had for this reason, even more than that of Du Paty de Clam, an exceptional importance.

It remains to examine if the further conduct of the two witnesses did not take away all value, all guarantees of sincerity, from the declarations that they made in 1894 before the Council of War, and if the authority for the judgment given is not found from that time necessarily shaken.

The complaints against them all had their origin in the suspicions which in 1896 Lieutenant-Colonel Picquart, who had succeeded Colonel Sandherr as Chief of the Section of Statistics since July 1st preceding, had conceived and expressed, in regard to Walsin Esterhazy, chief of battalion, whom he considered the author of the *bordereau*.

In what way were these suspicions really roused? Had they been caused by the discovery of a telegram, of a *petit bleu*, received at the Information Bureau in March, 1896, and presented in August by M. Picquart to General Gonse as compromising Esterhazy, to whom a foreign agent would have addressed it?

Was the telegram authentic, or was it false?

Under these circumstances, had Picquart taken for confidant one of his friends—M. Leblois, lawyer

—and had he shown him secret papers, interesting to the security of the State?

It must be remembered that Picquart, having collected information derogatory to the morality of Esterhazy and his involved financial situation, having learned also, from an interview arranged outside of France between Commandant Henry, aided by Captain Lauth, and a foreign agent, R.C., that a French chief of battalion, aged from forty-five to fifty years, was said to have given information in 1893 or 1894 in regard to a gun on trial at Chalons camp, on the new rapid firing cannon, and on fortification works in the East—having succeeded at last in procuring letters in Esterhazy's handwriting, wished to make the Chief of Staff and the Minister share his conviction that the author of the *bordereau* was Esterhazy, and not Dreyfus.

It is important to remember, on the other hand, that the officers under orders at the Section of Statistics were disturbed by these steps; that particularly Commandant Henry had resolved to counteract Picquart's work, to ruin his authority in the eyes of Generals de Boisdeffre and Gonse, and that, with this object in view, he allied himself with the legal police officer of the Dreyfus trial, Lieutenant-Colonel Du Paty de Clam.

Then, to reply to the production of the *petit bleu* and to a note of September 1st, 1896, in which Lieutenant-Colonel Picquart gave his opinion on the guilt of Esterhazy, appeared successively two false documents.

September 4th, 1896, the "Weyler forgery" (No. 372 of the secret *dossier*); it is a letter sent to the Minister of Colonies to be forwarded to Dreyfus; in this letter, whose characters are strangely twisted, the signature, a pretended Weyler, announces the approaching marriage of his daughter. But between the lines was written in invisible ink this phrase: "Impossible to understand last communication; necessary to return to the old system; let me know the word for the cupboards, and where the documents taken away can be found; actor ready to act at once."

Commandant Cuignet declared, before the Criminal Chamber of the Court of Cassation, that, to his mind, this paper, fraudulently prepared to increase the charges against Dreyfus, was the work of Du Paty de Clam. But the latter denies it.

The second fraud, October 31st to November 2nd, 1896, is the Henry forgery; we will return to him.

Meanwhile the *Eclair* inserted in its number of September 15th the article relating the communication which, at the Council of War of 1894, had been made in regard to the paper "This rascal D——" (canaille de D——), wherein the words "that rascal D——" had been replaced by "that animal Dreyfus." Commandant Cuignet also attributes this article to Du Paty de Clam.

Nevertheless, they had succeeded in persuading General Billot that Picquart, who had been sent

on a mission, should be replaced by Henry himself as Chief of the Bureau of Statistics.

And, a month after Picquart's departure, a letter, which was said to be addressed to him, signed "Speranza," intended to destroy him, was detained at the Ministry of War (he did not know it until a year after); it was another counterfeit of which Du Paty de Clam pretends to have had no knowledge.

But it was already felt that a campaign was going to be undertaken for the revision of the Dreyfus trial. M. Bernard Lazare had published a pamphlet entitled "A Judicial Error." The relatives and friends of the condemned man were moving, and Senator Scheurer-Kestner, convinced of his innocence, had on September 12th, 1897, when at Belfort, announced to a superior officer of the Staff his intention to follow up the revision. As indicated in a recent letter from him, published with his authorisation, he had been begged by this officer, on October 16th, in the name of the Minister, not to make any beginning without seeing him.

Therefore, on the 16th of October, at the General Staff, it was decided to warn Esterhazy, in order that he could be on his guard.

An anonymous letter, signed P. D. C. (is it Paty de Clam?), had been sent to the Minister to delay action; and a meeting took place, in which the question was discussed whether they should write under cover of an assumed name to Esterhazy, whose address Henry had found through Gribelin, keeper of records in the Marne.

"It is true," said Du Paty de Clam, "that there was a meeting in which the means of warning Esterhazy were discussed, and among the suggestions was that of an anonymous letter, whose composition was modified twice. One of these letters was almost a verbatim copy of an anonymous letter written to the address of the Ministry. The other was much shorter and was composed by Colonel Henry."

"The letters must still be in existence; they were not sent. The last time that I saw the *dossiers* in which these letters ought to be, they were at the Staff office."

"One day," said General Billot, "I do not recall the exact date, General Gonse, in his midday report, when giving me different anonymous documents, announced that a campaign was going to be made to accuse Commandant Esterhazy of being the author of the treason for which Dreyfus had been condemned. General Gonse asked me, as well as the Councillor who had come to call me, and who had mentioned to him a note verified by M. Gonse, my opinion, and said that he had asked the Minister if it would not be in order to warn this officer by an anonymous letter.

"I replied to General Gonse that not only would I not authorize a communication of this nature, but I should forbid it in a formal manner.

"In the evening, at six o'clock, I notified General de Boisdeffre of this incident at the time of the report, and I told him to renew to General Gonse the order that I had given him.

"The next morning, at the noon report, General Gonse, when I questioned him, replied that he had received from General de Boisdeffre the confirmation of my orders."

Esterhazy nevertheless received, the 18th or 20th, a letter signed "Espérance," which we quote:

"Your name is going to be the object of a great scandal. The Dreyfus family are going to accuse you publicly of being the author of the writing which served as the cause of the trial Dreyfus. This family has numerous models of your writing to use as points in the examination. A colonel who was at the Ministry last year, M. Picquart, gave the papers to the Dreyfus

family. This gentleman has now left for Tonkin, I believe. The Dreyfus family count on making you wild by publishing specimens of your handwriting in the journals, and making you flee to your relatives in Hungary. This will indicate that you are guilty; and then the revision of the trial will be asked for in order to have the innocence of Dreyfus proclaimed. It is M. Picquart who gave the information to the family. This M. Picquart brought your handwriting from sub-chiefs at Rouen last year. I hear all that from a sergeant of your regiment, to whom they gave money to have your handwriting. You are now well warned of what these scoundrels will do to ruin you. It is for you now to defend your name and the honour of your children. Make haste, for the family are going to take steps to ruin you.

"Your devoted friend,

"ESPÉRANCE."

"Do not show this letter to any one. It is for you alone, and to save you from the great dangers which threaten you."

M. Du Paty de Clam, before the Criminal Chamber, on January 12th last, declared that he was not the author of this letter.

But had he not himself admitted the contrary on the 10th of September preceding, before General Renouard, who, in his Report the next morning to the Minister of War, said, "Questioned on the circumstances which had given him a knowledge of the intended campaign projected and undertaken against Esterhazy, Lieutenant-Colonel Du Paty de Clam pretends that having received orders from his chiefs to prepare successively two drafts of anonymous letters destined to warn Esterhazy, letters that he also claimed had not been sent—he concluded from this that they proposed, by charg-

ing him with this work, to make him *au courant* with the affair in order to incite him to warn Esterhazy."

General Roget also does not hesitate to say, "I have been able to secure the certainty that the letter of October 26th, 1897, signed "Espérance" . . . . is that of Du Paty.

Be that as it may, Esterhazy was warned; he hastened to Paris, and incredible scenes took place.

Esterhazy said before the Criminal Chamber :—

"In October 1897 I was in the country, when I received on October 18th (I was told to say that it was the 20th) a letter; this letter was signed 'Espérance.'

"On receipt of this letter, whose handwriting I did not know, I was very much surprised and started for Paris.

"I went to the Rue de Douai. I would have it understood that, until then, I had concealed, in the strictest manner, my relations with Mme. Pays, and I thought that only a very few persons at the Ministry of War, and under conditions that I will explain later, could know of them.

"I had telegraphed to Mme. Pays, who was in Normandy, to return.

"The morning after my arrival I was very much occupied with this letter, and in the evening, on returning about the dinner hour, I learned from the concierge (animated at that time by different sentiments from those she has since manifested), that a gentleman had been to inquire for me. I was very much surprised; no one, in fact, knew of this address.

"The concierge told me that she had declared to this gentleman that I was unknown; he replied that he knew perfectly well that I was in the house; that, furthermore, he had come in my interest, and that it was absolutely necessary for him to see me; he had told her that he would return in the evening.

"I went to my home, 27, Rue de la Bienfaisance, where I could not get in, having left the keys in the country.

"I asked the concierge if any one had been to inquire for me.

I thought that any one who wanted to see me would first go to my only known residence.

"The concierge said she had seen no one.

"I returned then to the Rue de Douai, and waited all the evening.

"No one came.

"The next morning at an early hour (half-past seven) the concierge came up and told me that the gentleman who came the night before was waiting in the street, near the Square Vintimille.

"I went down, and I found some one with blue spectacles, and whose whole bearing, in spite of his efforts, stamped him as a soldier.

"This gentleman came to me and said:

"'Commandant, I am charged with a very grave communication in your urgent interest.'

"The manner of this man, the certainty I had that no one outside of the Ministry could know that I might be at the Rue de Douai, caused me to at once suppose that I was in the presence of a messenger from the Ministry of War.

"I replied to this man that I thought I knew the object of his visit, and that I had received in the country a letter containing a very singular announcement. This person then said:—

"'Do not be uneasy, my commandant; we know what there is in all that; you have defenders and protectors who are very powerful and *au courant* with everything. Will you come this evening to the rendezvous that I am going to indicate?'

"I said to him: 'Very willingly.'

"And he then showed me a piece of paper, indicating the angle of the Reservoir for the waters of the Vanne, opposite the Park of Montsouris.

"The rendezvous was for five o'clock.

"I went to the place at the time mentioned, and, at precisely five o'clock, I saw a carriage stop at a point about one hundred yards from where I was, in which there were three persons.

"Two of these persons stepped out; the third remained in the carriage; the other two came to me. In one I recognized the man I had seen in the morning. The other had a false

beard and spectacles. The latter person spoke to me quickly, saying:

"'Commandant, you know what this means?'

"And very rapidly, with great volubility, he related all that had been done against me since 1894 by Colonel Picquart, entering into numerous details on the manœuvres of many important persons—things which at that time were absolutely new to me.

"This man also assured me, seeing the profound surprise that I manifested at all this news, that all these machinations were known, foreseen; repeated to me that I had the most powerful defenders, and that I must only obey strictly the instructions which would be given me, that my name would not even be mentioned.

"I tried at various times to make him tell who he was, but without succeeding.

"I saw, however, that he was an officer; I should have been glad to know who he was and from whom he came.

"He told me at the end of half an hour's conversation, not to be disturbed; that I should be kept *au courant*, and that I should be every day in the waiting-room of the Military Club at five o'clock, where the first man would come to find me if there was anything to tell me.

"They left me, telling me to go away in a certain direction; they left from the side where the carriage was, so that I could not see the third person who had remained in the carriage.

"The next morning, at the same hour as the day before, the concierge brought me a line in pencil saying:

"'In the cab, before a certain number, Rue Vintimille.'

"I went in all haste; I found the man with the false beard, who said to me: 'Get in quickly'; and told me to indicate a place where we could have a long talk without being disturbed.

"I said to him: 'I do not know any other place around here than the Cemetery of Montmartre, if you wish to go there.'

"We went there, and then this man said to me:—

"'You must ask at once for an audience with the Minister of War, and we will state what you are to say to him (because I had asked: "Demand an audience of the Minister, to tell him

what? To show him this letter that I have received?) He then answered:

"'No, we will arrange what you are to say to him.'

"I then said to him:

"'But all this is very well. I see that you are an officer. I discern that you come from the Ministry; I should very much like to know who you are?'

"The man replied:

"'I am Colonel Du Paty de Clam, of the staff of the army. And you have only to do what I tell you.'

"I did not know Colonel Du Paty de Clam.

"I had met him once for an hour, sixteen or seventeen years before, at a meeting of two columns in Africa. In view of his grade and his capacity, I said to him:

"'That is sufficient, my colonel; you can count on my absolute obedience.'

"Then Colonel Du Paty de Clam dictated to me in the cemetery itself a request for an audience with the Minister, gave me to understand that he would have to make a report of what had passed, and gave me a rendezvous for the same evening.

"He had said nothing about the rendezvous at the Military Club; I went there, however, and I found the first gentleman, who made me get into a carriage, and took me slowly as far as the Cirque d'Hiver.

"He told me, with many details, all the machinations of which I knew nothing. He assured me that I was perfectly well known, and laid great stress on the high protection of which he had spoken to me the day before.

"I had addressed my letter to the Minister.

"In the evening I again saw at the meeting-place indicated, Colonel Du Paty de Clam, who made me write from his dictation notes in regard to what I was to say to General Billot. The same evening I found Colonel Henry in a carriage before my door.

"Colonel Henry was one of my comrades. I had been with him for more than twenty years in the Information Department, very soon after the organization of the department; I was there as lieutenant, and Henry also had the same grade and the same employment; I had seen him very frequently since.

"I knew later that the third person who remained in the carriage at the park of Montsouris was Colonel Henry. Henry then very briefly told me not to be alarmed, that all that Colonel Du Paty de Clam had told me was entirely correct, and that in high authority they well knew what was going on, and were determined to defend me by the most extreme measures against what he called 'abominable manœuvres.'"

Are these assertions of Esterhazy exact?

It is impossible, unfortunately, to have the least doubt, in view of the statements of the archivist, Gribelin, who accompanied them, and of Du Paty himself.

But let us continue the testimony of Esterhazy:

"The next morning I was notified that I would be received the day after by General Millet, Director of Infantry, in the name of the Minister.

"I saw Colonel Du Paty, and I said to him:

"'Why General Millet? The chief of a sub-direction has nothing to see in such a matter. If the Minister did not wish to receive me, he should have arranged for the Chief of his Cabinet to do so, or rather the Chief of the Staff of the army.'

"In fact, the very wording of my request for an audience explained that it was on a matter important enough for the Chief of Staff.

"The Colonel replied that it was not necessary to see General Boisdeffre, consequently he must remain in reserve, thus indicating that General de Boisdeffre did not wish to take any active part.

"I went to see General Millet; I presented the letter, and I related to him what I had been instructed to say.

"The general listened to me, and told me that he found it all very strange; that it was the first intimation he had of it; that he did not understand the story at all; that, in his opinion, I attached a great deal of importance to an anonymous letter, and that he could only advise me to make a written statement of what I had just communicated to him, to enclose a copy of the

anonymous letter that I had received, and to address the whole to the Minister.

"The same evening I reported to Colonel Du Paty de Clam the reply of General Millet, and he dictated to me the wording of a letter to address to the Minister; this letter, as well as all that I wrote in 1897, was given word for word as ordered.

"This letter was dictated to me word for word. It contained a series of explanations agreed upon, and the wording was given me for my approval, as is proved by the note from Colonel Du Paty:

"'Copy your letter and seal it well; keep the manuscript.'"

Esterhazy resumed:

"At the same time Colonel Du Paty said to me: 'The Minister cannot do otherwise than tell General de Boisdeffre of the contents of this letter, and then we shall move.'

"The next morning at the post-office in the Rue de Bac, opposite the Bon Marché, Colonel Henry informed me that General de Boisdeffre had not yet received from General Billot any communication from my letter.

"I insist upon this fact, because if Colonel Henry was aware that General de Boisdeffre had not been informed by the Minister of the letter that I had written to the latter, he could only have been notified of it by General de Boisdeffre, then awaiting the effect of my letter, and consequently knowing the sender.

"Henry said to me:

"'The Minister is going to keep that for five or six days before taking any decision, according to his custom. You will be told this evening what to do.'

"That evening I saw Colonel Du Paty on the Esplanade of the Invalides, and he said to me:

"'It is decided that you are to write to General de Boisdeffre directly; your letter will then permit General de Boisdeffre to intervene personally and to speak to the Minister of the letter that you have sent to the latter.'

"In other words, it would induce the transmittal of my letter to General de Boisdeffre, in order that this general officer could

come upon the scene himself, thanks to the letter I had written him.

"At this time, Colonel Du Paty said to me one evening:

"'The chiefs are trying to have with you a means of communication which will not be disclosed, because it is probable that you are watched. Having been informed of all that is preparing, it would be better to have, in case of necessity, an indirect transmission. General de Boisdeffre thought of the Marquis de Nettancourt, your brother-in-law.'

"I said: 'No, my brother-in-law is in the country; I do not want to ask him to return for such a service.'

"Then he said: 'We thought also of one of your comrades in the regiment;' and he asked me to mention one of them. I said:

"'Really, one cannot ask a friend to run like that at all hours of the day or night.'

"And I thought, unfortunate inspiration it was, of my cousin Christian; but as he was at Bordeaux, and I could not make him come back, I said:

"'I would propose to you some one devoted of whom I am sure, but I really do not dare to make the proposition.' And I named Mme. Pays.

"Colonel Du Paty told me that he would report, and the next morning he told me that they would accept Mme. Pays as intermediary.

"In the course of these interviews Colonel Du Paty presented to me one evening a lady whom it is useless to name, and who also served as intermediary at various times.

"At this moment I saw Colonel Henry, who said to me—

"'All these people do not move. Méline (the Prime Minister) and Billot (the War Minister) and all the Government are taken up by the approaching elections and by the votes represented by Scheurer-Kestner, Reinach, etc., etc.'

"He was even very violent; I will not repeat the military terms in which he indulged. He ended by saying—

"'If we do not put a bayonet in the back of all those people, they will sacrifice the whole French Army to their seat as Senator or Deputy!'

"And, on leaving me, he said, 'Sabre in hand! We are going to charge!'

"This occurred the day before my first letter to the President of the Republic, that is to say the 28th of October.

"Colonel Du Paty de Clam dictated the text of the letter to the President of the Republic.

"I called his attention to the fact that the wording of this first letter was very extraordinary. (All the details of this letter were dictated to me word for word; this dictation took place on the Esplanade des Invalides, and I wrote with a pencil).

"M. Du Paty replied:

"'Everybody knows that you are queer. From you it will not appear extraordinary. It is in your style.'

"I remember very well that I said to him—

"'Since it is like that, I don't care. . . . The moment that you command I obey.'"

"Here is the letter—

"*Paris, October* 20th, 1897.

"TO THE PRESIDENT OF THE REPUBLIC—

"I have the honour to address you the text of a letter anonymously written, which was sent to me the 20th of October, 1897.

"It is I who am designated in that letter as being the chosen victim. I do not wish to wait until my name has been given to the public to know what will be the attitude of my chiefs. I therefore addressed my chief and natural protector, the Minister of War, to know if he would summon me the moment my name was pronounced.

"The Minister has not replied. Now my house is illustrious enough in the annals of history in France and in that of the great European Courts, to make the Government of my country have a care that my name should not be dragged in the mud.

"I address myself to the supreme chief of the army—to the President of the Republic. I ask him to stop the scandal, as he can and should.

"I ask him for justice against the infamous instigator of this

plot, who has given to the authors of this machination the secrets of his Bureau to substitute me for a wretch.

If I have the misfortune not to be listened to by the chief of my country, my precautions are taken to call upon the chief of my house, the suzerain of the Esterhazy family, the Emperor of Germany. He is a soldier, and will know how to place the honour of a soldier, even an enemy, above mean and suspicious political intrigues.

He will dare to speak loud and strong, to defend the honour of six generations of soldiers.

It is for you, M. le President of the Republic, to judge if you are to force me to carry the question on this ground. An Esterhazy fears nothing and no one, except God. Nothing and no one will prevent my acting as I say, if I am sacrificed to I do not know what miserable political combinations.

I am, with the most profound respect, etc.

ESTERHAZY.
Chief of Infantry Battalion.

Esterhazy adds:

"The next morning, or days following, as the President of the Republic had not replied, they made me write the letter about the document *libérateur*.

October 31*st*, 1897.

M. LE PRESIDENT OF THE REPUBLIC,

I have the regret to state that neither the Chief of State nor the Chief of the Army has given me a word of support, encouragement or consolation in reply to a superior officer who places his threatened honour in their hands. I know that considerations of Parliamentary politics prevent the Government from making a frank and clear declaration placing me beyond harm, and stopping for ever the defenders of Dreyfus.

I do not wish that the services rendered to France during one hundred and sixty years by five general officers whose name I bear, that the blood shed, that the memory of these brave people killed in the face of the enemy, the last yet very recently, that all that should be paid with infamy, to serve such combinations and save a poor wretch. I am driven to use all means in my power.

Now, the generous woman who warned me of the horrible machination woven against me by the friends of Dreyfus, with the aid of Colonel Picquart, has been able to procure since, among other documents, the photograph of a paper that she succeeded in getting away from this officer. This paper, stolen in a foreign legation, by Colonel Picquart, is most compromising for certain diplomatic personalities. If I obtain neither support nor justice, and if my name is pronounced, this photograph, which is to-day in a secure place, will be immediately published.

Excuse me, M. le President, for having recourse to this means, so little in keeping with my character, but remember that I defend much more than my life, more than my honour, the honour of a family without spot, and in this desperate struggle, where all supports fail me, where my brain is bursting, I am obliged to make use of all weapons.

I am, with profound respect, etc.,

ESTERHAZY,
Chief of Infantry Battalion.

Finally, the 5th of November, a third letter :—

Paris, November 5th, 1899.

M. LE PRESIDENT OF THE REPUBLIC.

Excuse me for importuning you a third time, but I fear that the Minister of War has not communicated to you my last letters, and am anxious that you should know the situation. It is, besides, the last time that I shall address myself to the public powers. The woman who has made me *au courant* with the odious machination plotted against me has given me, among others, a paper which is a protection for me, as it proves the rascality of Dreyfus, and a danger for my country, because its publication with the fac-simile of the writing would force France to humiliate itself or to declare war.

You, who are above all vain party quarrels where my honour serves as ransom, do not leave me under the necessity of choosing between two alternatives equally horrible.

Force the Pontius-Pilate of politics to make a declaration clear and precise, instead of manœuvring to preserve the voices of the friends of Barabbas. All the letters I have written will

be placed in the hands of one of my relatives, who has had the honour this summer to be received by two emperors.

What will be thought throughout the world, when the cold and cowardly cruelty with which I have been left to struggle in my agony, without support, without counsel, is known? My blood will fall on your heads. And when the letter of which the Government knows is published, and which is one of the proofs of the guilt of Dreyfus, what will the entire world say to this miserable Parliamentary tactic, which has prevented silence being imposed on the pack of hounds by some energetic words?

I utter the French cry, "*Haro* to me, my prince! To my rescue!" I address it to you, M. le President, who, before being the Chief of State, are an honest man, and who ought to be profoundly moved in the depths of your soul by the cowardice that you see.

Let them defend me, and I will send back the paper to the Minister of War without anyone in the world having laid eyes on it; but should they not defend me—for I can wait no longer—I will shrink at nothing to defend and avenge my honour so shamefully sacrificed.

I am, etc.,

ESTERHAZY.

The three letters were odious. What can be thought, in fact, of an officer trying to exercise over the Chief of State a real extortion by this threat of recourse to a foreign sovereign, and to divulge secrets of a nature to bring about international complications?

They were odious in still another point of view; for they conveyed the idea that the document which Esterhazy claimed to have in his possession had been taken from the Minister of War by M. Picquart, and stolen from his house by a woman. The object was to ruin the Colonel, and

soon after they tried to further compromise him by sending to Picquart's address in Tunis two false telegrams, one signed "Blanche," the other "Speranza"; but, in fact, they reached Madame X, one of his friends, and unjustly aroused suspicions which had grave consequences for her.

M. Du Paty de Clam knew, however—if we can believe General Roget and Commandant Cuignet—what to think about the delivery of the "document libérateur."

General Roget said:—

For myself, I am persuaded that the paper, called "document libérateur," was given to Esterhazy by Du Paty.

I am persuaded, also, that it is a paper which he had kept from the trial of 1894.

I recall, to establish this assertion, the following facts:

When the newspapers, at the beginning of the Esterhazy affair, began to speak of the paper in question, the following conversation took place in the offices of General Gonse, between the General, Henry, and Du Paty.

General Gonse asked what could be the paper of which Esterhazy spoke, and they tried to imagine what it was about, when Du Paty said incidentally, "Unless it is the paper 'That scoundrel of a D. . . .'" Now, neither General Gonse, nor Henry, nor anyone, would have thought naturally of this paper.

Henry even said immediately: "What could he do with that paper? And in what way would it establish his innocence?"

It was the astonishment expressed by Henry in this instance which made me remember it when I reminded him of it in making my examination; and I obtained confirmation of it from General Gonse.

Commandant Cuignet: "The veiled woman is no other than Du Paty."

M. Du Paty knew what to believe also in regard to the letters themselves, sent to the President of the Republic.

Listen to the official report of the confrontation which took place between him and Esterhazy, the 24th of August, 1898, before the Examining Council presided over by General Florentin.

The witness (Du Paty de Clam). Esterhazy wished to write to the Emperor of Germany; I told him that he had better write to the President of the Republic, who was the father of all the French people. This letter, I know it, as I took a copy of it later at the Ministry of War. Esterhazy told me that it had been dictated to him.

M. Esterhazy.—I want the Lieutenant-Colonel to tell who dictated it to me.

The Witness.—Ah! I do not know! Would you say that it was I?

M. Esterhazy.—Tell the truth.

The Witness.—It was not I.

M. Esterhazy.—Then, how did matters transpire?

The Witness.—He wanted to look for foreign aid, from his relatives, and to ask the German Emperor through them if he had ever had relations with him, and to beg him to defend his honour as a member of an order of which this sovereign was grand master.

M. Esterhazy.—That is it! I called upon the German Emperor as a vassal. Having decided to commit suicide, I wished first to call on all those who had any interest in defending an Esterhazy.

The Witness.—Yes, it was then that I turned him away from this idea, and made him write to the President of the Republic.

The President.—But these letters contained a sentiment of a threat?

The Witness.—In my opinion, Esterhazy was then in a rather queer mental condition. I saw the letter at the Ministry, and told him that this letter, which he declared had been dictated to him, was crazy. Certainly it was not I who dictated it to him.

The President.—But, then who did dictate it to him? And

furthermore, if it was dictated to him, what could have been his state of mind when drawing up this letter?

The Witness.—It was not I. Esterhazy was admirably informed; but everything that he was told was of a nature to discourage him. They wished, he said, to ruin above all Du Paty and General de Boisdeffre. As to making known to the Council if my relations with Esterhazy were ordered or were only a personal affair, I refuse to reply before Esterhazy.

The President.—In any case, what did you do personally, and in what measure were you a party to the matter?

The Witness.—As far as relates to the articles for the newspapers, he was assisted in his reply to the article "Vidi." I even corrected the reply.

The President.—He did not act alone, then, but with the help of officers in the active army?

The Witness.—Yes.

The President.—We need to know in what measure he was guided, and, therefore, responsible.

The Witness.—Esterhazy never knew that he was defended by the General Staff, but only by individuals; I was one of those most interested in the manifestation of the truth, and that is why I helped him. I did not see the letter to the President of the Republic until I saw it at the Ministry, after it had been received there.

The President.—You approved of sending this letter?

The Witness.—Yes; and I gave him the framework or substance. But after having read the letter I found fault with the composition.

M. Esterhazy.—But, then, tell the truth! Say how these letters were dictated!

The Witness.—I say that I do not know.

The President.—Was it you who inspired what the threat contains?

The Witness.—He spoke to me of writing it.

The President.—You do not know who dictated it?

The Witness.—No.

The President to Esterhazy.—Where were they written?

Esterhazy.—One back of the Caulaincourt bridge; another at the Invalides bridge; I do not know where the third was

written. I wrote them with a pencil at the dictation of someone; I recopied them quietly at home.

The President to Esterhazy.—Do you know if Du Paty knew this someone?

Esterhazy.—Yes; the colonel knew him.

The Witness.—I knew him; I do not say that I did not, not being a sneak. Besides, I only knew from Esterhazy that they had been dictated to him.

Esterhazy.—I beg the colonel to say that he knew the author of the letter—that he knew him as well as I did; that it is absolutely exact that these letters were dictated by someone he knew, as well as the article "Dixi" (in the *Libre Parole*).

The President to the Witness.—I ask you the question.

The Witness.—I have said all that I had to say.

The President.—Then, if you only knew it from Esterhazy, it is not your testimony. You only repeat the assertions of Esterhazy?

The Witness.—It is impossible that the article "Dixi" should have been done by Esterhazy; therefore, it was given him.

The President.—That is not testimony, but an opinion. We do not need it.

The Witness.—I have nothing to say.

The President.—To resume or sum up, you aided Commandant Esterhazy. Was it on your initiative?

The Witness.—I do not wish to say before Esterhazy.

The President.—Does Esterhazy lie in saying that the letter was dictated to him?

The Witness.—He does not lie . . . or rather . . . I withdraw what I said.

Esterhazy.—I assert that the article was brought to me all written, and that the letters were dictated to me.

The Witness.—I am sure that he tells the truth as far as the article is concerned. As for the letters, I do not know. . . I do not dare to confirm the statement of the Commandant, I do not say the contrary.

Du Paty de Clam had then taken an undeniable part in the drawing up of the three letters, which,

instead of bringing upon their signer an immediate punishment, had a contrary result—to make him obtain the satisfaction he desired.

This satisfaction was granted him by the publication of an official note, through the Agence Havas (News Agency) on November 9th (the last letter was dated the 5th). The President of the Council and the Minister of War informed the Council of the intention of MM. Castelin and Mirman, deputies, to put them a question relative to the polemics of the Press engaged in the Dreyfus affair. M. Méline and General Billot indicated to the Council the reply that they made; "Captain Dreyfus has been regularly and justly condemned by the Council of War. The condemnation is in force with its full effect; it can only be modified or weakened by a decree for revision," etc.

Esterhazy, finding himself covered by this confirmation of the guilt of Dreyfus, returned on the 14th the paper which he had threatened to use; and the Chief of the Cabinet of the Minister of War merely acknowledged the receipt of it on the 16th.

But on the 16th M. Mathieu Dreyfus, brother of the condemned, publicly denounced him as the author of the *bordereau*.

The same day Esterhazy wrote to General Billot:

M. le Minister, I read in the journals this morning the infamous accusation brought against me. I ask you to cause an investigation, and I hold myself in readiness to reply to all accusations.

An investigation was, in fact, ordered, and confided to General de Pellieux.

What is, from this moment, the attitude of Henry and Du Paty de Clam ?

Esterhazy's deposition :

In the last days of October I received from Colonel Du Paty de Clam a *grille* intended for correspondence either with him or Colonel Henry in case of need; it is that seized by M. Bertulus.

November 16th, I read in the morning the denunciation of M. Mathieu Dreyfus.

I go at once to the Governor of Paris and inform him that I shall at once demand an investigation of the Minister.

There I am notified that General de Pellieux will be charged with the investigation; this inquest is opened; my cousin arrived suddenly, and I was foolish enough to use him as intermediary; but the real intermediary during all this time has been Mdlle. Pays. After the beginning of the inquest, I was informed every evening of what had been done through the day; I would call attention to the fact that results of an inquest cannot be communicated to officers of a grade so low as Colonel Henry and Colonel Du Paty occupied; they can only be communicated to general officers; General de Pellieux could not inform his officers of an inferior grade of his investigations. Therefore, the results of this inquest were transmitted to me regularly only under the form of prescription, of what I must say when questioned. I received every day written prescriptions, and I transmitted myself observations and remarks intended as replies to the communications made to me.

I had received the order to burn these notes as they were received; so I burnt a great many.

Most fortunately, and without saying anything to me about it, Mdlle. Pays put several of them aside.

Here is one which was among the papers remitted to the "concierge"; it is a note which Colonel Du Paty has admitted to come from him.

At that time I had written that it was necessary that all

officers—at least, the principal ones who had been mixed up in the Dreyfus affair—should come to testify before the General. Colonel Du Paty had received a summons, and, before appearing, he wrote me the note in question.

This note proves that all evidence given before General de Pellieux was made in accordance with my wishes :—

"In case General de Pellieux should ask me if I have had any relations with you, I have the intention to tell him this, which is perceptibly true: As soon as we were informed anonymously of the plot against Commander Esterhazy, I realised the importance of warning him so as to prevent some desperate act. So I put myself in communication with him by means which I wish to keep secret, so as not to compromise third parties, to whom I am tied by my word of honour. I may say, however, that the veiled lady is totally ignorant of these relations. My relations with Commander Esterhazy have had the effect of preventing him from taking extreme measures, for he had been warned on his side. As soon as I knew that he had in his possession a secret document, all my efforts tended towards making him give it up, in appealing to his patriotic sentiments; and I must say that I succeeded in this without any difficulty. So my intervention has served to moderate an exasperation. I have abstained from getting him to communicate anything of a secret character. The information of that sort which he may have had he received from another source. I know nothing about the campaign against Picquart.

"Besides, General Boisdeffre knows that I have been in indirect communication with Commander Esterhazy. From the moment that Commander Esterhazy has had supporters and a counsel, and has written to the newspapers, my relations become useless. As he has taken an engagement with me, I will release him from his word of honour, if you wish it. For without that he will think himself obliged to deny the relations, but his word, like mine, will stand.

"Consequently:

"1°.—As long as you have no official letter from me, you are not supposed to know me. 2°.—Keep silent with regard to the relations we have had together. 3°.—Maintain that

these relations had no other object except to encourage you, to advise moderation, and to appeal to your good sentiments to give up the document, and that they had nothing whatever to do with the affair of the veiled woman. 4°.—Never have I divulged anything confidential to you; and it is not I who have denounced Picquart to you.

"This is the ground upon which I will place myself; bear well in mind all I mark in red, and destroy. You understand how important it is to agree perfectly, for you as well as myself. All is well; the person who has fetched the famous letters from Picquart, written in an agreed style, is precisely the author of the telegram signed 'Blanche,' which is in his handwriting a little disguised."

M. Du Paty de Clam admitted before General Renouard, the 9th of September, 1898, that he wrote this note.

Q.— . . . Esterhazy has received directions for the examination which he was to undergo before General de Pellieux. . . . ?

A.—Quite so; I told Esterhazy not to speak of our relations. I told him that I could not see him, and that if he were interrogated in reference to our interviews, he was to say he was bound by promises; and if they insisted, he was to ask to be first of all released from his word of honour.

Q.—This letter was in two handwritings?

A.—Yes; I had commenced to write in capitals, and afterwards I went back to my usual handwriting. This note is from me.

He has recognised it also before the Criminal Chamber, the 12th of January, 1899.

These are the conditions under which the preliminary inquiry was made by General de Pellieux, who, among other witnesses, heard Lieutenant-Colonel Picquart, called back from Tunis.

An order was given on the 4th of December to make an inquiry, and this inquiry Commander Ravary, reporter to the first Court-Martial, made on the 7th.

We will let Esterhazy speak.

. . . The inquiry has commenced more complete, and was longer and more detailed than the inquiry made by General de Pellieux, but it was made in the same manner—that is to say, I received every day formal instructions about what I was to say. Once, to obey my counsel, M. Tézenas (who at that time did not know what was going on)—I had taken a step of my own accord—I was told to mind my own business. Commander Ravary was called before the General Staff, where certain documents were communicated to him. Every day also I was informed of the proceedings of the inquiry, and told what I was to say always by the same persons, either Colonel Henry or Commander Du Paty; but it is quite evident that these communications concerning the details of the inquiry were not made to these officers who were considered absolutely as witnesses. They were made to the chief of the General Staff, or, which is more probable, to the head-clerk of the General Staff, to be remitted to the chief of the General Staff. It is interesting to me to state that these communications which were made in much higher quarters than to the officers reached me the same evening.

We must here insist upon the measures which, in the offices of the General Staff, at least between Henry and Du Paty de Clam, had been contrived to save Esterhazy.

Perquisitions had been made neither at his house nor at the house of Mdlle. Pays, his mistress.

It is true that, warned since several weeks, he had had time to take precautions; and he himself, in his letter to the Minister of War dated October

25th, 1897, dictated by Du Paty de Clam, had anticipated the suspicions which his relations with a foreign military attaché and the resemblance of his handwriting and that of the *bordereau* might have aroused.

In this letter he had said, on the one hand :—

My embarrassed situation is known since a long time among the Jewish society, my family relations in the diplomatic world, my few but very open relations with Colonel de Schw—— who has known my parents at Carlsbad, all this was calculated to make me the victim of this frightful plot.

He had said, on the other hand :—

In one of the documents published in this connection I read that the *bordereau* had been written on tracing paper. This naturally led me to think that someone had procured some of my handwriting, and that Dreyfus had used it to manufacture his occult correspondence, and to turn suspicions towards me in case of surprise. I did not know Dreyfus; but, unfortunately for me, my handwriting had been around at bankers, money-lenders, jewellers, and other people with whom Dreyfus might be acquainted. Nevertheless, this explanation did not satisfy me. At the time of the duels, Morès, Cremier Mayer, &c., I received numerous letters from Israelite officers, to whom I replied by a word of thanks. Still, this explanation did not satisfy me any better, for it was necessary to have a great deal of my writing to have the words of the *bordereau*. I remembered then that in the beginning of 18[illegible] a time I can very well remember for personal reasons, I received from an officer of the Ministry a request for circumstantial information on the part taken during the campaign of Crimea by the cavalry brigade that my father commanded. This officer had a work to prepare on the operations around Eupatoria. I made quite voluminous notes and sent them to him, although, at his request, I did not address them to the Ministry. It is possible that

they fell under the eyes or into the hands of Dreyfus, either by being lent to him, or otherwise. It would be easy to find out through this officer, Capt. Bro.

This method of defence had been suggested to Esterhazy by Du Paty de Clam, who recalled having, as legal police officer, on October 18th, shown the photograph of some words of the *bordereau* to Dreyfus, who had replied: "It seems to me vaguely that this is the writing of Bro."

In consequence, Esterhazy had sent to Toulouse, where Captain Bro was not found, a letter and a telegram, on the pretence of asking that officer if he had not sent him early in 1894, to the house of a friend living in the Rue de Lafayette or Rue Chateaudun—M. Hadamard lives in the Rue Chateaudun—some information on the Crimean war. Captain Bro, whom the letter and telegram finally reached, was absolutely stupefied, and replied to Esterhazy: "None of my friends or acquaintances live in the Rue de Chateaudun; not having the honour of knowing you, even by name, I never asked anything of you, either verbally or in writing."

Dreyfus, therefore, had never been lent by Captain Bro the pretended notice, to trace the writing of Esterhazy.

But, in the information against Dreyfus, this hypothesis of tracery remained; and that is what, in part at least, led the experts Belhomme, Couard, and Varinard, commissioned November 14th by Commandant Ravary, to conclude that the *bordereau*

contained "an awkward imitation of Esterhazy's handwriting," but "was not his work."

Nevertheless, in the course of the *expertise*, and notwithstanding the protection by which he was surrounded, Esterhazy was extremely disturbed, as is proved by the draft of a letter found in a Japanese vase at the house of Mdlle. Pays by the Judge of Instruction Bertulus.

What must I do later, if the experts refuse to conclude as you had hoped? Must I ask, as Tézenas wished at first, as is my right, that the experts should show the writing to be trace-work? Why have not Charavay or Varinard, whom you know decided for me in the Boulancy letter, manifestly a trick? Belhomme is an idiot; you have only to look at him. All these people are going to assassinate me. Can it not be proved, however, to Ravary and the experts that I did not write the terms of the great letter—the Uhlan letter—to Boulancy? If the experts conclude that the writing is mine, it is impossible for me, in my defence, not to be forced to show that Dreyfus is the author of the *bordereau*. You understand, then, that if you are really masters of the examination and of the experts, I can only report absolutely to you, but that, if that escapes you, as I fear, I am absolutely bound to prove that the *bordereau* is traced by Dreyfus from my handwriting.

December 31st, Commandant Ravary prepared a report, and, alluding to the schemes practised, not by those who, like Henry and Du Paty de Clam, wished at any price to save Esterhazy, but by those who, with the Dreyfus family, tried to obtain the revision of the trial of 1894, he finished by these words:

To sum up, what remains of this sad affair, so wisely planned? A painful impression which will have a sad echo in

all truly French hearts. Of the actors in the scene, some came to the front, and others remained in the corridors, but all the means used had the same object, the revision of a judgment legally and justly rendered.

The Council of War, before which Mme. Dreyfus wished to intervene, rejected the argument presented by her counsel, saying:

"In that which concerns Madame Dreyfus:

"Whereas the Council of War is not engaged in the affair of ex-Captain Dreyfus, upon which it has justly and legally decided;

"That the Council of War cannot admit Madame Dreyfus as party for the plaintiff at the debates without breaking its rules;

"That in case of closed doors the Council cannot authorise Madame Dreyfus, any more than her counsel, to take part in the debates."

From the moment when it declared the guilt of Dreyfus to be "justly and legally decided," the Council of War could only acquit Esterhazy.

This was done January 11th, 1898.

On the 12th, Esterhazy wrote to a General that he did not wish to name, a letter, of which the draft was seized by M. Bertulus:

My General,—I write you to express very badly—for I do not find words to express to you what I feel—all the profound, all the infinite gratitude that I have in my heart for you. If I have not succumbed in this monstrous campaign, it is to you, and you alone, that I owe it.

THE TALE OF FORGERIES.

(From the Report of M. Ballot-Beaupré.)

The Henry forgery was not the last of which Dreyfus had to complain.

Two others have yet to be mentioned.

M. Cavaignac, the 7th of July, 1898, had—besides the Henry forgery—indicated with the paper, "This scoundrel of D.....," as proof of guilt, a letter (of the secret *dossier*), on the subject of which Commandant Cuignet explained himself before the Criminal Chamber of the Court of Cassation.

This paper is an authentic letter, written with black pencil on paper "quadrillé," by Agent B. . . to Agent A. . . Its text is as follows:

"My very dear friend, I finished by calling the doctor, who forbade me to go out. So not being able to go to you to-morrow, I beg you to come to me in the morning, as D—— has brought me many interesting things, and we must share the work, having only ten days' time. Try then to tell (sic) to . . . that you cannot go up.

"Sincerely yours, (Signature)."

What constitutes the suspicious character of this letter, which bears the date of March, 1894 (date of the Information Department), is that the initial D appears to cover another initial or capital letter which has been erased with rubber.

Further, the space which separates this initial from the first letter of the following word appears to me to be an absolutely unusual distance, when one limits himself to putting only an initial.

It seems to me that this space had been filled by letters following the capital letter which seemed to have been erased.

Also the three dots which follow the letter D... seem large and bent, much larger in any case than the punctuation points found in the authentic text.

Finally, by examining the paper with a magnifying glass, it appears that the near quadrillage of the letter which seemed to have been rubbed out, had also been touched by the eraser, which confirms my opinion that a rubber had been used to erase a letter or a word.

It also seems to me, in continuing my examination with the glass, that the points following the initial "D" cover letters of which I perceive some traces without being able to reconstruct the letters.

For these different reasons, the paper, of which the whole of the text is authentic, appears eminently suspicious.

M. Bertillon examined this document. He recognised there, like Commandant Cuignet, "an erasure or rubbing out, followed by retouches." He believes, however, that under the capital "D" was already another "D."

By whom then were these alterations made? It is evident that someone wished to fraudulently create a new charge against Dreyfus.

That is also what some one wished to do with the paper (forty-four of the secret *dossier*), which gave rise to three depositions by the Secretary of the Embassy—M. Paléologue. On November 2nd, 1894, at four minutes past three in the afternoon, when the arrest of Dreyfus had, since the morning of the day before, been announced by the Press, a cipher despatch, placed in the telegraph-office of the Rue Montaigne, was addressed to the Government by a military attaché. The tracing was taken at

the Administration of Telegraphs on thin bank post paper, giving the complete reproduction of the original, which was sent back to the telegraph-office of the Rue Montaigne, to be the following year delivered to the Ministry of Posts and Telegraphs and destroyed, in conformity to the rules.

No doubt of its authenticity is possible. No doubt, either, of its translation. This is what results from the report by Messrs. Chamoin and Commandant Cuignet, delegates of the Ministry of War, and M. Paléologue, Secretary of Embassy, delegate of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. The translation, made together by the three delegates mentioned, brought out the following version: "If Captain Dreyfus has not had relations with you, it would be well to charge the Ambassador to publish an official denial, in order to avoid the comments of the press."

But, in the beginning, the key of the cipher was not known; they hesitated on the last words; and the Minister of Foreign Affairs had given to the Information Department, under all reserve, a first version, which finished thus, "official denial, our emissary warned." A few days after, the Chief of the Office, Colonel Sandherr, received the exact version: "Official denial, in order to avoid the comments of the press."

This definite wording M. Paléologue declared to have "seen in the hands of Colonel Sandherr and to have spoken to him of it at different times."

But, at the Ministry of War, they have no longer

either the second version or even the first; both have disappeared.

And M. Paléologue said before the Criminal Chamber, January 9th:

The last days of April or the first days of May 1898, Colonel Henry came to see me at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and asked me, with a slightly embarrassed air, if I could procure for him a copy of a telegram of November 2nd, 1891. I did not understand his question very well at first, and I replied, "But you have it—that document! I saw it in the hands of Sandherr; what has become of it?" Henry answered, "I do not know; we do not find it. The papers of the *dossier* have been scattered about in several safes. In short we haven't it any longer."

I replied to him that it did not belong to me to give him a document of that nature, and that he had only to request it at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs through the Minister of War. He asked me then if I could not at least let him have a copy non-officially. My reply was that the writing of an agent of foreign affairs would give this piece an air of authenticity that I was not qualified to give. "Anyhow," I added, "I have recited this telegram to you so many times that I can recite it once more. You are free to write it from my dictation."

He took a pencil and a sheet of paper, and wrote from my dictation the words that I indicated. The interview finished there.

What became of the writing dictated to Henry by M. Paléologue is not known.

What is certain is that General Gonse, not being able to obtain from the Ministry of Posts and Telegraphs even the original, which, in conformity with the rules, had been destroyed in 1895, and not wishing to have only a certified copy of the tracing taken on the thin bank post-paper, called on M. du Paty de Clam in May, 1895, to recon-

struct the wording of the telegram; and it is the paper No. 44 of the secret *dossier*: "Captain Dreyfus is arrested; the Minister of War has the proof of his relations with Germany; all my precautions are taken."

M. Paléologue testified on March 29th, before the assembled Chambers, that his conscience and his instructions obliged him to say that no error of memory could justify the differences which existed between the wording in question and the wording preserved at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. "The piece No. 44 is not only erroneous, *it is false*."

This was another fraud, due to the collaboration of Henry and Du Paty de Clam, and intended to be a weapon against Dreyfus, of a cipher despatch which on the contrary was favourable to him, as it proved that the signer did not know him.

What motives then determined these two men to thus persecute the condemned of 1894?

For Henry, a sentiment of personal interest already shown, and perhaps an unavowed complicity which bound his cause to that of Esterhazy.

He said in his defence:

"In reality, there is only one motive in my intervention in Esterhazy's behalf. It consists in the considerations that General Gonse pointed out to me when he revealed the Esterhazy affair to me; considerations of exterior order that I exposed to the Court without making them in writing, considerations of an anterior order, which exist, in spite of what General Roget says, in pretending that I hide myself behind them, considerations the nature of which is known, and of which no denial can prevent the existence. In closing, I will

say how much I am saddened to have been abandoned by my chiefs. Never would I have believed that General Gonse would disown me after having pushed me ahead. Never would I have believed that a former Minister, after telling me 'You have rendered a great service to the country,' would leave my call without response. Never would I have believed that a general to whom I devoted myself without reserve would have abandoned me after having said to me, 'During my lifetime you will never be sacrificed.' While only my military personality and my career was touched, I remained in the greatest *vis-à-vis* my chiefs. To-day they attack my honour by an officer who dares to attack his superiors in the most inconceivable manner, and accuse me for long months of things about which I have never been questioned. One can believe that my indignation is great. But, nevertheless, in the interest of my country, I only defend myself in the measure strictly necessary to explain my acts."

The acts are known, and the revelation destroys all faith due to the judgment inquiry in 1894.

If Dreyfus was condemned, it was because Henry, as delegate of the Minister, brought to the Council of War an impassioned deposition from the Information Department. It is because Du Paty de Clam, after having produced in the mind of the accused a veritable confusion, brought to bear upon the debates an ardour of which Dreyfus complained.

Their testimony is vitiated by the long series of indefensible manœuvres they practised to assure the acquittal of Esterhazy.

COLONEL PICQUART'S VINDICATION OF CAPTAIN DREYFUS.

(*From the Report of M. Ballot Beaupré.*)

It is painful to be obliged to emphasise the criminal perversion of one who wore the uniform of our army, and who without doubt, under other conditions, would have worn it with honour. It is painful that even his death has not been able to protect his memory by the charity of silence. But the demands of truth and justice do not allow of this. The crime committed by Lieutenant-Colonel Henry has had a bearing upon the entire Esterhazy case; and how could it have been otherwise? If it had ended in the demonstration of Esterhazy's guilt, there was at the Ministry of War a document the falsity of which would have been at once apparent to the Minister and the Generals. In this document Dreyfus was plainly designated. And, in connection with his case, if Esterhazy had been found guilty, Henry, as Chief of the Service, would have been compromised and doubtless dishonoured.

But, as far as Dreyfus is concerned, do not the false documents constitute a new fact, which, in breaking up the accusation, establishes his innocence? Was Henry a witness of no importance in the Dreyfus affair? And if his deposition was one of the most serious, was it at the same time sincere and veracious? We would fain believe so, but can we?

This is the same man who, knowing himself to be bearing false witness, accuses others and gives the lie direct to Lieutenant-Colonel Picquart. He is the man who, while the Minister exhorts him to tell the truth, swears eight consecutive times that he did not commit forgery.

Well, and what rôle does he play before the Court-Martial which condemns Dreyfus? Major Henry was delegated to bring forward, on behalf of the Minister, confidential information, which could, should it so happen, supplement the data of the examination. If any deposition was of supreme importance, assuredly it was this. There is more, and this is decisive.

It is certain, says the Keeper of the Seals, that the *bordereau* found in 1894 by du Paty de Clam in the hands of General Gonse, Sub-chief of the General Staff, had been brought to this general officer by Lieutenant-Colonel Henry, at that time chief of battalion and sub-chief of the Bureau of Information.

And again, at the time of his arrest, on Aug. 30th, 1896, Lieutenant Colonel Henry declared to General Roget, chief of staff of the Minister of War, that it was to him that an agent, unnamed, had brought the *bordereau*, it having come, he added, by the "usual channel (la voie ordinaire)."

And so the origin of the *bordereau* has for its only guarantee the word of Henry, the fabricator of false documents; and when one hears the experts give the opinion that this particular document was forged, one cannot help having many anxious doubts. As long as all was unknown, one had

confidence in the justice of the verdict. But as revelations have come to light, a cloud of objections has arisen, and a deep uneasiness has weighed upon many a conscience. Lieutenant-Colonel Picquart had, on behalf of the Minister of War, taken part in the session of the Dreyfus trial. As chief of the Information Bureau, he conducted the subsequent inquiries, and he was able on all these points to inform himself exhaustively. Finally he made, with the consent of the government, an *exposé* of the circumstances which seemed to bring in question the stability of the verdict of 1894. This information was addressed in confidence to the Minister of Justice, and it is fitting that the communication in question be brought to your knowledge.

LETTER FROM LIEUTENANT-COLONEL PICQUART TO THE MINISTER OF JUSTICE, KEEPER OF THE SEALS.

Paris, September 14th, 1898.

SIR,

I have the honour to indicate to you the reasons upon which I base my deep and firm conviction of the innocence of Dreyfus:

First, I give a summary of these reasons; I shall pass later to the detailed development of each of them in turn.

I.—Dreyfus was arrested solely upon the suspicion of having written the *bordereau*. When the *bordereau* came into the hands of the bureau of information, it was supposed *a priori* and unjustly, that, in view of the documents enumerated therein, it could have been written only by an officer of the ministry, preferably by an artillery officer, and the handwritings of the officers of the general staff were compared with that of the *bordereau*.

After some hesitation, it was found that the writing of Dreyfus bore a likeness to that of the *bordereau*.

Dreyfus had never been suspected before; no previous supervision had admitted the suspicion of temptations, of questionable relations, of the need of funds; it had merely been remarked that he evinced a tendency to inquire indiscreetly into what was going on about him. But this tendency is not inexplicable in the case of an officer on probation who is attached to the General Staff of the Army for purposes of self-instruction, and who finds in his position a unique opportunity for familiarizing himself with our military organization.

The writing of the *bordereau* bears merely a resemblance to that of Dreyfus. On the other hand, it is identical with that of Esterhazy. The documents specified in the *bordereau* are, as a rule, of no small value. Dreyfus, had he been inclined to treason, could have supplied himself much more. Moreover, the documents in question bear no relation to the particular ones which Dreyfus had in hand at the time the *bordereau* was written.

B. Admitting Dreyfus to be its author, certain phrases in the *bordereau* are inexplicable, for example, the following, "Provided you do not wish that I should have it copied *in extenso*." Dreyfus had no secretary at his disposition; Esterhazy, as Major, had one. Here is a point which can readily be understood, admitting the *bordereau* to be the work of Esterhazy.

II.—When Dreyfus was arrested, in an attempt to lend his *dossier* more weight, a secret *dossier* was made up, and this was communicated to the judges of the court-martial. Not one of these documents is applicable to Dreyfus.

III.—It has not been possible to arrive at the motives by which Dreyfus was actuated; he had never manifested unpatriotic feelings; he possessed a fortune, he had a home, he led a regular life.

IV.—Dreyfus has always protested his innocence, and moreover the alleged confession made to Captain Lebrun-Renault was nothing more than the result of an interested move on the part of his enemies.

V.—An attempt has been made to prove that Dreyfus was continually in a position to lay hands upon the documents

mentioned in the *bordereau*. These documents were never thoroughly investigated when I was attached to the Ministry. They came altogether, or nearly so, from Du Paty de Clam, and were generally passed without any supervision. Moreover, they had no value.

VI.—The chiefs, Generals Billot, de Boisdeffre, and Gonse, have never raised an objection to any of the facts to which I drew their attention, with the exception of the false document brought to the Ministry of Colonies at the beginning of September, 1896, and the false document assigned to Henry which made its appearance at the end of October or the beginning of November of the same year.

VII.—Henry and du Paty de Clam have employed the most culpable measures to emphasize the guilt of Dreyfus and the innocence of Esterhazy.

I now take up in detail each of the paragraphs numbered above.

And Lieutenant-Colonel Picquart then proceeds to develop each of the paragraphs which we have just indicated. We are obliged to confine ourselves to the reading of the most interesting portions:

When it became clear that there were no other charges against Dreyfus but that of the *bordereau*, documents which might be applicable to him were sought for among those of the service of information, and of these was formed a *dossier*, which I propose to consider in detail.

This *dossier*, which had been locked up in the file belonging to Henry towards the close of December, 1894, and which I received from the hands of Gribelin towards the close of December, 1896, was divided into two parts. The first, which had been communicated to the judges in the council chamber, was composed of four documents, accompanied by an explanatory commentary, made up, as Colonel Sandherr assured me, by Du Paty de Clam. The second part of the *dossier* was of small value. It comprised seven or eight documents in all—

to specify, several photographs, the secret documents, and several documents of no importance, having more or less reference to those of the first part.

I propose to take up in succession the documents of the first part, indicating, so far as my memory will admit, the terms of the commentary. For the rest, I maintain that my memory of these facts is very vivid, by reason of the profound impression made upon me by the sight of this *dossier*.

First document (torn in pieces, and then put together): a letter with a note written by a person whom we will designate by the initial "A," probably to his superiors. It was "A's" custom to sketch such plans, which he threw into the paper basket. This letter, written in a foreign language, was of the close of the year 1893 or 1894. I believe it authentic. It was worded, or approximately worded, as follows:

"Doubts——what to do? Let him show his officer's certificate. What has he to fear? What can he supply? There is no interest in maintaining relations with an infantry officer."

The simple common-sense shows that the author of this sketch had received propositions from an individual calling himself an officer; that he had some doubts as to the opportunity he was given of entering into relations with the latter, and that it concerned someone who was in the infantry.

The text, in a foreign language, was faithfully translated in the commentary of du Paty de Clam, but he drew therefrom a most unexpected inference:

"A finds," says du Paty, "that there is no advantage in maintaining relations with infantry officers. He selects rather a Staff Officer, and takes one attached to the ministry." This commentary enables one to note the treacherous spirit by which du Paty de Clam was actuated.

Second document: This was an authentic letter from (a person whom we designate by B) B to A, dating from the early part of 1894; it had been torn and then put together, and was worded approximately as follows, "I desire to have some information upon a question of recruiting." This last reference, continues Lieutenant-Colonel Picquart, is to a matter which was not absolutely confidential. "I shall ask Davignon" (then sub-chief of the second division), "but he will tell me nothing.

Therefore ask your friend. Davignon must not know of it, because he should not learn that we are working together."

That you may understand this matter, it should be said that the foreign military attachés went about once a week to the second division, where, at this time, they were informed very freely about everything which was not confidential. The officers of the second division even complained of working more for the foreign attachés than for the General Staff.

The commentator says: "At the time when B wrote to A, Dreyfus was in the second division. Evidently it is he whom B designates as the friend of A." This comment is absurd. In the first place nothing has ever admitted the proof that A had relations with Dreyfus. Even if we admit that the *bordereau* is the work of the latter, nothing in any event indicates that this friend was Dreyfus, nor who it was who furnished secret documents to A. B dwells too lightly on that point, above all when he says, "Davignon must not know of it"—that is equivalent to saying that the friend might be the chief of division, might be du Paty himself, who had an understanding with A, might be the chief of the foreign section at that particular time. All these officers were on excellent terms with A, and would not have hesitated to give him so futile a piece of information as the one in question.

The third document was an authentic letter from B to A, dated 1894. It had been torn and then put together. B said approximately: "I have seen this blackguard D——. He gave me for you some dozen plans."

The commentator says: "It was proved whether the plans were in their place. They were. It was not proved whether the plans of the First Division were also. It is allowable to believe that Dreyfus had taken those of the First Division and had loaned them for the time being to B, to be forwarded to A. As a matter of fact, Dreyfus was attached to the First Division in 1893. He worked in the room where these plans were kept, and since that time the combination of the locks had not been changed."

This accusation is monstrous in the eyes of any one knowing the routine of the offices of the General Staff. In the first place twelve plans make up a considerable package, and in the

vaults of the First Division their disappearance must have been instantly noticed. How can we admit that Dreyfus, who since a year was no longer attached to the First Division, could penetrate there and possess himself of such a package, an act which was all the more dangerous in that the vault in question was one of those most often visited? How can we admit that, always unperceived, he could have carried off this package, when at the same time he had in his possession a quantity of other documents also of interest to A?

It may be remarked that nothing in the letter from B to A mentions the necessity of returning the documents, and that is why I am inclined to believe that they might have been taken from the Geographical Service, where it would have been possible to abstract them without too much difficulty. Whereas in the First Division the thing is entirely impossible.

As regards the initial D, that suggests nothing. Foreign powers do not designate spies by the actual initial. I myself know a spy whose real name is C; he introduced himself to the foreigners under the name of L, and by them he is called N. Finally the letter D could not be applied to a man having, from the point of view of espionage, the importance of Dreyfus.

All the objections which I have enumerated I made to my superiors, and Major Henry, and they were not able to deny their value. They accounted for much, I believe, in the origin of the false Henry document, where Dreyfus was named in full. I am not able to speak here except as my memory serves me, for there are some points which remain obscure. I earnestly urge that they be brought to my attention and that mention be made of the objections which may arise. I investigated all these documents thoroughly two years ago, with a complete understanding of the case, and I did not arrive at my absolute conviction of their inanity from the point of view of Dreyfus's guilt, until I had examined the question from all sides.

If one admits that these documents were able to decide the uncertain opinion of the judges of the Court Martial of 1894, one must confess, that when the latter emerged from a debate of four days, which had greatly disturbed them, that they were searching for a clear and intelligible idea upon which to rely

after the convinced discussions of the experts, and that they discovered this in the notes upon the *dossier*, whose origin was new, and in which they placed complete trust.

Then as they may not have been able to take account of the value of the documents which might be new for them, they accepted the explanations given them without suspecting the trap which their loyalty prevented them from perceiving. And further on, when at the end of August, 1896, the investigation upon Esterhazy and the secret *dossier* had convinced them of the innocence of Dreyfus, I made a report to General de Boisdeffre, who authorised me to explain these matters to Colonel X——; he, however, told me to take into account a forged document of which I will speak later on, which had come in at the commencement of September, 1896, to the Minister of Colonies. He asked me also to weigh the evidence of the forged Henry document, but he never brought forward any other objections. In fine, he was absolutely opposed to revision and to proceedings against Esterhazy, without being convinced of the absolute guilt of Dreyfus.

I said as much to General Billot, who for some time believed in the innocence of Dreyfus, and whose belief in his guilt was founded on the forged Henry document. He had always believed in the guilt of Esterhazy during the time that I was attached to the Ministry. So far as General Gonse, with whom I was able to speak freely, is concerned, I think I may enter upon some details. When, by order of General de Boisdeffre, I went on September 3rd, 1896, to report to General Gonse the report of my enquiry on the subject of Esterhazy and Dreyfus, the General listened to my reasons and did not dispute them. He merely made a face and said to me, "Well, then, we have been mistaken!" Then he instructed me not to concern myself with this matter. The letter of September, 1896, shows clearly that he brought forward no affirmation adverse to mine. At the time of his return to Paris on September 15th, he was still more explicit. I think I can repeat word for word the conversation I had with him on this subject, and which will never be effaced from my memory.

The General.—What business is it of yours if this Jew is on the Ile du Diable?

R.—But if he is innocent?

G.—How do you expect to go all over this trial again? It would be the most shocking story. General Mercier and General Saussier are both tangled up in it.

R.—But, General, he is innocent, and that should be enough to revise the case. But, from another point of view, you know that his family are at work. They are searching everywhere for the true culprit, and if they find him, what will be our position?

G.—If you say nothing, no one will ever know.

R.—General, what you say is contemptible. I do not know what I shall do, but in any event I shall not allow this secret to be buried with me. And I left him instantly. From that moment I understood clearly the situation.

Once again General Gonse spoke to me of the guilt of Dreyfus apropos of the forged Henry document. Several days before General de Boisdeffre and General Gonse asked me if the Minister had made any special communication to me. Finally, one morning, the Minister told me that he had a letter of B showing the guilt of Dreyfus. As I went out I met General Gonse, who said to me: "Well, are you convinced?" I replied, "Not at all," and I told him that it was a forged document, to which he replied: "When a minister tells me something I always believe it."

In brief, my superiors never disputed openly the innocence of Dreyfus; and they never brought forward but that one empty proof of his guilt—the alleged avowals. For four months I was engaged upon an inquiry upon Esterhazy without any incident arising to interfere with my investigation. But from the day when I reported to General de Boisdeffre that Esterhazy was the author of the *bordereau*, there arose a series of plots against Dreyfus and myself, of which I am the victim to this very hour; and their principal authors, if not their actual instigators, I know, can have been only Du Paty de Clam and Henry—that is to say, the two principal representatives for putting in motion the Dreyfus affair. And this, too, to my way of thinking, is one of the proofs of the emptiness of the accusations against Dreyfus. If, indeed, proofs of his guilt had been available, it would

not have been necessary to reinforce them by fraudulent means, nor to attack his defenders. Moreover, the manœuvres of Du Paty de Clam and Henry commenced from the very outset of the Dreyfus affair. We note that the first frauds were insignificant, but that they grew little by little to end by arriving at actual forged documents. The first manœuvre was Du Paty de Clam's interruption while Dreyfus was writing. Du Paty de Clam felt it necessary that Dreyfus should seem disturbed while he dictated the *bordereau* to him. As he was not disturbed Du Paty de Clam addressed this question to him, "What is the matter with you? You are trembling!" And this was intended to take unawares the good faith of the two witnesses—Messieurs Cochefert and Gribelin. Bad faith is here evident to any one who was accustomed to matters of this kind. For any one who is posted on matters of espionage the proof that the weakness of this *dossier* was well known, is that it is much talked of, but not shown, and that General de Boisdeffre never submitted to the minister in 1889 the documents of which it was composed. Moreover, the General told me at that time, while the *dossier* was still there, that no pains had been spared during the trial to influence the judges. Colonel Sandherr told him that he had said to one of the Judges: "I give you my guarantee that he is guilty." On the other hand, Captain Gallet, one of the judges, was closely associated at this time with Colonel Henry, who did not fail to post him on his understanding of the matter. That is how the thing happened. I was present at all the Session, seated behind the Judges. It was seen that the outlook of the case was somewhat uncertain, and it was resolved to make a bold stroke. Henry said to me: "As you are seated behind Gallet, tell him to have me recalled to demand further information from me." As I refused to carry out this commission, Colonel Henry became angry, and made the communication himself during the adjournment of the trial. Captain Gallet brought up the question when the session was resumed, and Henry in making his deposition said: "We had it from an honourable person that an officer of the Second Division has betrayed information, and that officer is there," he added, pointing to Dreyfus. It was possible to surmise that the person in question had

denounced Dreyfus, but that was not so. This person, a foreign spendthrift, to whom I had paid 1,200 francs for this service, had said to Henry that the foreign military attachés had friends in the Second Division from whom they got information, and this advice agrees entirely with the actual facts; for the foreign military attachés were received at the Second Military Division in the most friendly fashion, and there given all information which it was possible to accord to them.

But Dreyfus was attached to the Second Division simply as an officer of probation.

The alleged admission to Captain Lebrun-Renault makes up in the same way a manœuvre, the consequences of which have been recently felt. From the time of the deportation of Dreyfus to the Ile du Diable, what it is proper to call "plots" increased. It was then that the forged Henry document was discovered at the Ministry of Colonies on the 25th September, 1887. This forged document was a letter addressed to Dreyfus, which, as was the case with all the correspondence particularly personal, passed first through the hands of the Minister of Colonies, where it was examined. I myself saw it, the signature was that of one named Veyler. He told Dreyfus that his daughter was being married. This letter was written in strange characters resembling a drawing rather than writing and made to attract the eye. Although for more than a year I had read all the correspondence addressed to Dreyfus, I had never seen either this handwriting or this signature. But what was more serious, between the lines were written these words with sympathetic ink, sufficiently visible, however, for one to read them almost entirely: "We do not understand your communication, specify where are the vaults containing the—" This letter, which was a most rude forgery, was intended to start the idea of a counter plot launched by the friends of Dreyfus, with the intention of substituting a dummy. I gave it to Monsieur Bertillon, who employed himself in having made by one of his employes an astonishingly accurate facsimile. As I looked at it against the light I noticed that the grain of the paper was identical with that of the original. M. Bertillon said to me with a smile—"We have thought of everything." The

facsimile was sent to the Ile du Diable in order to see what Dreyfus would do when he received it.

This forged document constitutes the serious fact of which I spoke to General Gonse in July, 1896.

Influenced by the chain of evidence, I thought for a moment that this document came really from the friends of Dreyfus, who, in order to save him, had had recourse to the most clumsy means. However, upon reflection, it did not take me long to become convinced of the character of this document, and I believe that it was Du Paty de Clam who was its author, since it was to his interest at that moment to render my work vain.

The idea of the dummy was one of those which Du Paty de Clam mentioned most frequently. At any rate, at this time Henry was on leave and could not intervene.

After this document, the false news reported in the press, particularly the article in the *Eclair* of September 15th, which originated certainly with Du Paty de Clam, for in it are entire phrases which are word for word similar to those which he uttered before me.

Finally the forged Henry document, which is too well known for me to emphasize it further, not to mention the explanation recently given by Monsieur Berthulus, Juge d'Instruction.

What it is necessary to remember of all this is that the guilt of Dreyfus was so uncertain that those in favour of his condemnation believed it necessary to reinforce it by forged documents, or to attack by underhand methods the methods of the prisoner.

In fine, Dreyfus was only arrested because it was unjustly believed that the *bordereau* was the work of an officer of the General Staff. Once arrested, nothing was found against him, but the accusation of the police reports trumped up against him for the case, and which could not hold water before the Court Martial of 1894.

The reason for attributing the *bordereau* to Dreyfus was the similarity of handwriting.

It has never been possible to discover the motive which would have led him to commit such a crime resulting in inevitable conviction.

The Minister communicated to the judges in the Council

Chamber the secret *dossier* composed of documents inapplicable to Dreyfus, and which could not be brought up against him unless one admitted the *commentaries* which accompanied the *dossier*, they having been compiled by Du Paty de Clam. The *dossier* was never submitted to the examination of the counsel for the defence. Dreyfus once convicted, attempts were made to elaborate this *dossier*, but so far without success. In the autumn of 1896, when the inquiry upon Esterhazy destroyed the grounds for attributing the *bordereau* to Dreyfus and broke down absolutely the accusation made against him, then it was that the start was made with the system of the forged documents.

At the time when I left the Ministry, in 1896, there were no other documents relating to Dreyfus besides those enumerated in the present communication. I demand, that if other documents have come to light since then, that I be placed in a position to report upon them. I demand also that all objections which may be applied to this Report shall be fully worked out, and that I be invited to furnish all such supplementary explanations as are necessary to bring the Dreyfus affair into the full light of day.

In conclusion, Monsieur the Keeper of the Seals, allow me to express my gratitude. You have given me the opportunity of doing what I have wished to do for two years—to quieten my conscience by telling the entire truth to one who is the supreme arbiter of justice, and in consequence one of the guardians of this country's honour. I beg at the same time that you will accept the assurance of my deep respect.

(*Signed*) PICQUART.

THE COMMUNICATION OF SECRET DOCUMENTS TO THE COURT-MARTIAL OF 1894.

(*Letter from Lieutenant-Colonel Picquart to the Keeper of the Seals, September* 15, 1898.)

"MONSIEUR THE KEEPER OF THE SEALS,

"I have the honour to send you the supplementary information which you asked me to furnish on the subject of the communication of the secret documents to the judges of the Court Martial which condemned Dreyfus in 1894.

"This communication was well known to all the officers intimately connected with the Dreyfus affair. I spoke of it at the time with General Mercier and General de Boisdeffre and Du Paty de Clam. And later, when I assumed direction of the Service of Information, I spoke of it to General Gonse and Colonel Sandherr and Major Henry and to Gribelin, the Keeper of the Archives. Finally Vallecalle, the recorder of the first Court-Martial, spoke of it to me during the Dreyfus enquiry in these words:

"'Was it not you who brought the secret *dossier* to Colonel Morel?'

"'At the same time as I myself was not charged to make the delivery, I am unable to inform you except by hearsay and by what I have seen myself; albeit these details are true as a whole, they should nevertheless be checked.'

"'How was the delivery made?'

"'Under sealed enclosure to the president of the Court Martial, there was another enclosure containing—first, the four documents which I have specified in my *memoire*; second, the commentary written by Du Paty de Clam on this matter. There is no doubt whatever about that.'

"When Colonel Sandherr spoke to me of this *dossier* in July, 1895, he said: 'The small *dossier* which was delivered to the Judges of the Court Martial is in the iron closet.' When I asked Gribelin for it, I said to him: 'Give me the *dossier*

which was delivered to the Judges of the Court Martial and which is in Major Henry's closet.' He gave it to me immediately, and in a particular envelope the four documents and the Commentary. When I showed this *dossier* to General de Boisdeffre, he recognised it perfectly and asked why it had not been burned as before agreed. General Gonse also saw it in my possession, and we spoke of it as the *dossier* delivered to the judges in the council chamber.

"2nd.—By whom was the delivery made? I am not entirely positive of the person who carried the *dossier* to the President of the Court-Martial. It might have been myself; it might have been Du Paty de Clam. This uncertainty may seem curious, but is nevertheless natural. I had severel deliveries to make at the time, and I was not familiar with the exact appearance of the *dossier* in question.

"3rd.—Where was the delivery made? At the Court Martial at Paris, and it was opened in the council chamber. At what time? Assuredly after the close of the session. Because in reporting the general impression of the deliberation to the Minister, I said to him that this impression was not unfavourable to the accused, but that at the time I was speaking the judges should be determined by the secret *dossier*. He did not contradict this reference, and moreover this secret *dossier* was always a clearly-understood thing at the Ministry. My declaration might be confirmed by Generals Mercier, de Boisdeffre and Gonse; Lieutenant-Colonel Du Paty de Clam, Gribelin, the keeper of the Archives, and the recorder, Vallecalle.

"Such, Monsieur the Keeper of the Seals, are the supplementary explanations which I had to offer you. I take the liberty of insisting in the same urgent manner that I should be allowed to furnish details which it is difficult to supply in writing."

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